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new media**
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icy falls**
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Changes of 30 years



People duplicate a pose seen in a 30-year-old photo yesterday. The exhibition, which marks the 30th anniversary of the country's opening and reform, features 800 photos displayed along Wangfujing Street.

CFP Photo

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**Caged kitties
bound for
southern plates**

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expect Chinese
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on Shanghai's
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keeps US from
Shanghai Expo**



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New grads face an even tighter job market



Crowds of job seekers trying to enter a job fair in Zhengzhou city, central China's Henan province.

IC Photos

By Han Manman

The financial mess has employment experts warning that 2009 will be an especially tough year for Chinese graduates seeking new jobs, a policy think tank said Tuesday.

This year an estimated 1.5 million college graduates probably were not able to find jobs, and the number will swell next year when the number of graduates swell by half a million, according to a blue book issued by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). The annual publication maps changes in China's social climate.

"I thought I could earn at least 2,500 yuan since I got a master's, but I will have to lower my expectations after months of job hunting," Wang Xinru, a Beijing Normal University graduate, said. Wang said she does not care about money any-

more: she just wants a job.

"With such a gloomy employment market, having a job is the most important thing," she said. Many of her classmates are in the same situation.

Chen Guangjin, vice director of the CASS sociological research center, said the financial crisis and growing number of graduates have put the squeeze on employment.

Migrant workers were also being affected, Li Peilin, director at the CASS sociological research center, said.

Li said the financial crisis and slowing economic growth forced 4 million migrant workers to return to their rural homes.

Some companies closed, further constricting employment possibilities, he said, while others, especially those in the smokestack

industry, shut down because of a drop in exports. Post-Olympics fall-out, prolonged snowstorms and the May 12 earthquake cost the country more than 1 trillion yuan, which may have exacerbated the slowdown.

Analysts predict economic growth will continue to slow, further cutting labor demand. Gross domestic product is likely to grow 9.5 percent this year and 8 percent in 2009.

Zhang Yansheng, head of the foreign economic research institute of the National Development and Reform Commission, the top economic planning body in China, said an 8 percent economic growth may be too optimistic for this year due to the sharp drop in industrial production, a driving force of growth.



Migrant workers prepare to go home. The gloomy job market forced them back early this year.

Higher tobacco tax to deter smokers from habit

By Han Manman

After high appeals to raise tobacco taxes to reduce the number of smokers, the State Tobacco Monopoly Administration (STMA) responded Wednesday that they are cooperating with the State Administration of Taxation and China Ministry of Finance.

STMA said the details will take time, but it is certain the tobacco tax will go up, as will the end price of tobacco products.

Raising the tax on cigarettes by 1 yuan per pack could help save thousands of lives and generate almost 65 billion yuan in revenue, a report released on Monday in Beijing said.

The report "Tobacco Tax and its potential influence on China," released by the Chinese Association on Tobacco Control (CATC), calls for a substantial increase in tobacco taxes in order to cut the number of smokers.

"The low cost of tobacco products in China contributes to a very high level of smoking, especially among males," Hu Teh-wei, a professor at the University of California who led the research team, said.

"The most effective way to reduce tobacco use is to raise retail prices through tax increases," Hu said.

The report said it is much cheaper to smoke in China than it is in regional neighbor countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. A 1-yuan increase in duty on a pack of cigarettes would save 2.7 billion yuan in medical costs. Furthermore, if fewer people take time off for medical treatment, 9.92 billion yuan of additional revenue would be produced.

The retail tax rate on cigarettes is about 40 percent, much lower than the average international rate of 65 to 70 percent. A 1-yuan

increase in the consumer tax will raise the rate to 51 percent, still lower than in many developed countries, according to the report.

The government should raise the tobacco consumption tax by between 1 and 4 yuan per pack, and gradually increase it to 60 percent of the retail price, the team reported.

"The poverty-stricken families both in rural and urban areas spend 8 to 11 percent of their income on cigarettes. Higher prices for smoking will force them to quit the habit," said Professor Mao Zhengzhong of Sichuan University, another member of the research team.

"The money they save on buying cigarettes can be spent on other daily necessities. Tobacco control in this way may help alleviate poverty to a certain degree," Mao said.

Although many smokers said

they understand the research team's good intentions and could accept raise tobacco tax, some still rejected the report.

"It is not fair to smokers, especially to the poor smokers. The biggest group of cigarette consumers in China is government workers. They don't even need to pay money to buy cigarettes. They won't quit no matter how high the tax goes!" Chen Yongjun, a smoker said.

"We are all under pressure in this economic mess. Smoking can reduce some of that pressure," Chen said. "[It] is bad for one's health, but it takes time to give up. The government take its effort one step at a time."

According to CATC, there are 350 million smokers in the country, or 36 percent of the population over age 15. An estimated 1 million people die from smoking-related diseases every year, and the figure will double by 2020.

Public project puts unused Games emissions on sale

By Zhang Dongya

A total of 8,895 tons of carbon dioxide emission credits were listed for sale on the Beijing Environment Exchange last Thursday. These emissions were the carbon dioxide reduced during the Olympic Games through the green transportation policy. It was the first time carbon emissions were sold as a tangible product on the Exchange.

The emissions were sold by the China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). The organizations started their "Low Carbon Footprint Action" this April to ensure a green community; they also started the Online Carbon Calculator to measure emissions.

From July 20 to September 20, the odd-even license plate policy in Beijing greatly reduced pollution during the Olympics and Paralympics. Ten domestic and foreign enterprises including General Electric (GE) and Mengniu Dairy participated in carbon calculation training. Some 81,670 people from a hundred companies registered to use the Online Carbon Calculator.

According to calculations, before the Games, carbon dioxide emissions were 1.53 kilograms per person. "Sales of the emissions tells the public that the carbon dioxide we produce every day can be measured by numbers and has value," Huang Haoming, secretary general of CANGO told *Beijing Times*.

The 8,895 tons of emission credits were sold without a base price. "Since it is the first time emission credits are sold on the domestic market there was no reference price," said Zhang Lingge, who is in charge of the China project in EDF.

In view of the carbon trade with Xinjiang by EDF it is expected to reach US \$444 million (3 billion yuan) at US \$5 per ton.

"This was a public welfare project, so people should pay less attention to the price," Zhang Tianhao, the spokeswoman for CANGO, said.

According to international practice, the money from the sale will be used to support the capital's environmental protection projects, especially the Carbon Sequestration Project in Badaling.

Several domestic and foreign enterprises have expressed an interest in purchase. It is expected to help build a good image and reputation for enterprises to buy emission credits.

In recent years, the country has emerged as a world leader in providing greenhouse gas emission credits, which shows a significant potential market for Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects in the world.

According to the Kyoto Protocol, in which participating countries agreed to reduce their overall emissions by the end of 2012, nations which emit less than their quota will be able to sell unused emissions as credits to nations that exceed their quotas from 2008 to 2012.

A domestic carbon trading system remains undeveloped.

Nanjing sends Guangzhou meat that meows

By Wang Yu

Cats circle their cages and fill the air with a terrible wail. Animals that once dined on Fancy Feast are due to become a fancy feast.

Photos of the cats stacked one atop another at Nanjing West Railway station have enraged the Internet's cat lovers, especially after they learned the animals were bound for Guangdong.

December 4 completed a three-day process that shipped 5,000 cats to the southern province. The cats who survived the long journey face a more gruesome fate: chefs waiting to skin them alive and cook them.

Local netizens phoned the police to ask them to halt the train, but the delivery company's paperwork was in order. The police were forced to send the train on its way.

The fight against domestic animal abuse has raged in recent years, as more Chinese families embrace pet ownership. The "human flesh search engine," the cyber-world's lynch mob, rooted out in 2006 one woman who posted photos of

herself crushing cats with the heels of her shoes.

But cat meat as a cooking ingredient remains in high demand, and it is supported by a well-organized delivery system that extends into several provinces.

The *Oriental Guardian* reported that Guangzhou has received shipments of cats for consumption from Nanjing for more than 10 years. The dealers have only recently turned to rail transportation. Some 1,000 cats flood into the province each day.

In the suburbs of Nanjing, the kidnapping and sale of cats to meat suppliers has turned into an underground trade that supports many on the fringe of society.

These "catnappers" sell their prey to a local boss for 10 yuan per head. On an average night, they can grab 20 cats. A boss manages an average 10 catnappers and will resell the cats he purchases to a big meat supplier for a profit.

In Guangdong, some people believe that cat meat helps eliminate excess humidity in the winter. Guangdong cuisine is



Many in Guangzhou oppose the culinary tradition. Photo by Xixi Senlin

infamous for its variety of cooking materials, which has made the province a frequent target of animal protection groups.

The domestic cat is not listed as a protected species by the Wildlife Conservation Association, so there is no legal barrier to ailurophagy. There are also no policies in place to protect strays, leaving police and government departments with no power to stem the trade.

Opponents have instead

focused on limiting the number of strays available to catnappers.

"We have worked with 50 pet hospitals to sterilize stray cats and build a base for cat adoption," Yao Liyou, a spokesman for the Association for the Protection of Small Animals in Beijing, said.

"As far as I know there are no cats sold as meat in Beijing, but we have received calls from other cities which were seeking help with similar issues," Yao said.

Internet aids in picking a new Mao



Yi Xiaojian, a Mao impersonator from Hengyang, Hunan Province, salutes the people.

Photo by Sanxiang City Express

By Huang Daohen

A "Super Girl"-styled selection began in former Chairman Mao Zedong's hometown of Xiangtan, Hunan Province, to seek a Mao impersonator for the lead role in a tourist drama, the event's organizer Hunan Repertory Theater said.

The drama, *A Red Sun Rises In Shaoshan*, is the highlight of the local "red tourism" project, a concept promoted by local tourism authorities since 2004 to attract visitors to places in which the Red Army once fought and lived.

As many as 130 Chairman Mao impersonators from across the country attended the competition and 29 made it into the finals —

voted there by the Internet. As of press time, over 13 million netizens have cast their votes and Xu Guoyin from Henan Province leads the tally with 2.7 million votes.

The winner will be announced tomorrow, the organizer said.

Zhou Yongjin, the director of the provincial cultural department and the drama's producer, said that the many tourists who visit Shaoshan from around the world would provide a solid audience for the drama.

"Photos and films are not enough. We need to revitalize the thoughts and charisma of the leader and bring back a living Chairman Mao," Zhou said.

The competition also brought

to public view the special group of people who make a living depicting Chinese leaders in the entertainment media.

Huang Taisheng, a 56-year-old restaurateur, was among them. Huang said he spent a lifetime learning to imitate Chairman Mao. He grew up in Hunan Province, in Mao's home county of Xiangtan, and at a very young age became obsessed with the leader.

When he was in high school, family and friends began to notice that he bore a strong physical resemblance to the helmsman, and by the time he reached adulthood he had become the spitting image of Mao. Huang began to emulate Mao in earnest, collecting record-

ings of Mao's voice to perfect the vocal similarity.

However, maintaining this striking resemblance does not always come naturally. Huang said that since he now makes his living exclusively on acting, he had actually undergone plastic surgery on his lips and cheekbones to make his face more closely resemble Mao's.

Other impersonators undergo similar plastic surgery, dye their hair and lose or gain weight in order to retain the appropriate body type, Huang said, "It's a living."

But indeed, Huang said one reason for this phenomenon is simply the satisfaction of seeing an historical icon come to life.

Students accuse Cola of packing plants with temps

By Venus Lee

A report about Coca-Cola's employment conditions released by university students from different cities last Sunday accused the beverage giant of dodging its legal and social obligations.

According to the report, Coca-Cola bottlers have packed their factories with workers from temp agencies to evade labor laws, and these employees are paid far less than the local minimum wage. Their work environment is unsafe and unhealthy, and they are given no insurance against work-related injury.

Temp agencies are a common employment system. When an employer acquires an employee from a temp agency, it does not sign a contract with the worker. The worker's contract exists with the temp agency, which dispatch him or her for no more than a few months.

The Labor Contract Law stipulates that employees provided to these temp agencies are only to fill temporary, auxiliary or substitute job positions. However, the students reported that these employees have worked for at least two years. Some have been in the bottling plant as long as 10 years.

The survey was initiated by Yang Zhengjun, 24, from Mizu University and Wang Wei, 21, from Zhejiang University.

They got the idea when they heard Shanxi Coca-Cola defaulted on its workers' salaries, so they decided to do investigate labor conditions in Coca-Cola bottling plants during their summer vacation.

The two extended their invitation to other friends and classmates, and they formed a nine-person group in August. The students went to Shanghai, Hangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan and Huizhou to investigate, and possibly to help the workers.

Wang was the only one who employed by Hongzhou Zhongcui Foods, one of the Coca-Cola bottlers. He worked in the factory for a week and interviewed the workers on the line or in their rooms.

Based on his interviews with over 20 workers, Wang said the employees were profoundly unhappy and resentful of their peers who had contracts with the bottling plant. "Ninety percent of the workers are from temp agencies. They are overworked and underpaid, and their food, shelter and entertainment options are terrible," he said.

The other members collected evidence including the copies employees' pay stubs, contracts and recorded interviews conducted with workers during their off-duty hours.

The students delivered the report on campus and called on Coca-Cola to apologize to these workers and sign proper contracts with them.

Coca-Cola China and the listed factories said the report was false, and denied each accusation stating that they were never contacted by the students.

← 9-15
WALL ST

By Jackie Zhang

The global financial crisis has shaken Wall Street, the nerve center of the global financial industry, to its roots and left many Chinese Wall Streeters anxious about their futures. Some have considered returning to China, a future plan always buried in the backs of their minds. But deciding to abandon the position and salary earned through years of hard work is never easy.

Stay or leave

The Wall Street crisis

Turbulent times

The US has the dubious honor of being the epicenter of this economic meltdown. As the largest financial center, Wall Street is facing tough times. Bankruptcies are a daily announcement, and mass layoffs are every office worker's biggest fear. For Chinese people — even senior managers — stationed on the Wall, it is time to rethink the future.

Guan Dapeng is the asset manager of Citibank. The company has already announced it will cut its global staff in half, leaving Guan uncertain about his future employment. "The decision influenced us a lot, since the number of cuts (50,000) was bigger than we had ever imagined," Guan told CCTV in an interview earlier this month.

He worked in several international financial organizations like JPMorgan and Credit Suisse before joining Citibank this April. "All that we can do now is to work harder and to try our best to escape the cuts," Guan said. "Only when you can make profit for the company can you have a hope of being retained."

He used his recent break to plan a way to return to China. "Some of my classmates and colleagues are working in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong. I wanted to go back and visit them to see whether there are opportunities, and to ask for their suggestions."

Preparing to investigate

Other Chinese people on Wall Street share Guan's plan. Chen Xunyang, who founded Wall Street Ren (WSR), returned early this month to explore the state of China's financial industry. He brought with him 260 resumes submitted by WSR members, all of whom hold senior positions in financial organizations or Wall Street enterprises.

His non-profit group is open to Chinese professionals who have achieved leadership positions on Wall Street. In recent years, it has established a close relationship with many top financial companies and organizations in China.

"WSR was established five years ago with some of my friends. Besides enhancing our position on the street, the organization is a way for us to communicate with professionals in the industry and keep in touch with and establish collaborations with financial organizations and institutions in China," he said.

The close relationship between WSR and Chinese financial organizations made Chen's visit purposeful and smooth. During his two-week stay, he visited CITIC Bank, Guangdong Development Bank, ChinaAMC and China Jianyin Investment Securities, as well as other companies in Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Chen said he is optimistic about the opportunities in the Chinese finan-

cial market. "The financial supervision system and related policies have made an advantageous environment for development," he said.

Chen said that many officials from financial governmental departments and senior staff of domestic banks have visited Chinese workers on Wall Street. "They come to New York and talk with us. Especially this year, many professionals and officials came to see how we were doing," Chen said the visits show China is eager to tap the skills of its overseas workers.

He said 10 percent of WSR's members are already back home. "Some 60 percent are working in Hong Kong and 40 percent on the Chinese mainland. Most are satisfied with their new work," he said.

But more remain in New York.

Hard to give up

The idiom "No pain, no gain" is common to both Chinese and English speakers. "Everything we have today was gained through extremely hard work," Chen said — to leave it all behind is a difficult choice.

In 1991, Chen left Beijing for the US. He studied finance, and his life had much in common with his Chinese peers'. A part-time job was mandatory to make ends meet. "We started from zero," Chen said.

After graduation, he found a job with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. "I sent my resume to the company and got an offer. I won my position based on my own effort and ability," Chen said, talking about the fierce competition.

His first Wall Street experience came as a funds manager for MetLife: it quickly grew into a career. His next job was at the New York branch of the Bank of Japan. His current bank is his third Wall Street job, though company rules prevent him from disclosing his position, he said.

"Wall Street is a global financial center. If you work here, it means your ability is recognized," Chen said. In his early days, Chinese workers were few and far between: not anymore. "There are around 300,000 people working on Wall Street, and 3 to 4 percent are Chinese," Chen said.

The fierce competition on Wall Street is hard to imagine for outsiders, Chen said. "It is not only a competition between Chinese and Americans, but among elites from all over the world. Financial organizations from different countries have branches and headquarters on Wall Street. If you want to hold your position and

climb, you have to sacrifice a lot — your time with friends or family, sleep, weekends and more."

Every morning, Chen starts work at 5:30 am and gets home between 8 and 9 pm. "I'm not the most dedicated," Chen said, "Many Chinese directors and managers go back home much later than me." For those who have just started their careers on Wall Street, especially those working in investment banks, they only can sleep two to three hours a day.

"In the past two decades, 1.2 million Chinese students have studied abroad, but only a few thousand found work on Wall Street, 500 to 600 of whom are senior staff," Chen said.

Experienced advice

Those who have already left Wall Street for China can provide suggestions for those still struggling in the US.

Liu Zhen was among the first Chinese students to pay his way through a US education. Like other students, his university experience was difficult. His major was astrophysics, and he switched to computer science for his masters. His internship in First Quadrant, a Los Angeles-based finance company, changed his career.

Director David Leinweber, a technologist and former investment manager, recommended Liu to D.E. Shaw, the biggest hedge fund company in New York. The experience there enriched his financial knowledge and broadened his view, and within three years he was bringing the company annual profits of \$20 million (136 million yuan).

He went on to work for the Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of America, UBS Investment Bank and Brevan Howard.

Earlier this year, Liu prepared to return to China. "Our home market is offering more chances. As the market develops, the space for us grows and enlarges," he said.

In August, Liu's own fund management company, Red Capital, started operations in Beijing. It also has offices in Hong Kong and Shanghai. "The Chinese financial market is not developed. Financial products are simple, so the company's business is still small. But as the market grows, so will we," Liu said.

He said that the feeling of working in China was totally different from in the US. "In China, I'm working for myself and the Chinese people. In the US, I'm working hard for my boss."

Yuan Xianzhi is another returned Chinese Wall Streeter. He returned to China in September and now works as the consultancy department director at Deloitte's Beijing branch. "You have to give something up," he said. "It is impossible to earn as much as what you made on Wall Street in China. It is important to be realistic. Once you accept that, everyday will be stable. Now, although I'm tired and have lots to do every day, I feel steady. Hope is better than difficulties."

“The idiom ‘No pain, no gain’ is common to both Chinese and English. ‘Everything we have today was gained through extremely hard work,’ Chen said — to leave it all behind is a difficult choice.”

“It is important to be realistic. Once you accept that, every day will be stable. Now, although I'm tired and have lots to do every day, I feel steady. Hope is better than difficulties.”

Chinese mainland, Taiwan start direct air, sea and postal links

The start of direct daily flights and direct shipping between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan is a historic event in the thawing of cross-strait relations. It marks the normalization of people-to-people contacts – social, cultural and commercial – 59 years after the island split from the mainland.

(VOA) – The Chinese mainland and Taiwan have begun direct air, sea and postal links. The move Monday marks a historical milestone in cross-strait relations, after the two sides split following a civil war nearly six decades ago.

Tensions have run high between the mainland and Taiwan ever since the Nationalist Party fled to the island after losing a civil war to the Communist Party in 1949.

On Monday, this conflict was overshadowed by what officials on both sides refer to as the realization of the three links – direct flights, direct shipping and direct postal service.

The head of China's Postal Bureau, Ma Junsheng, said at a ceremony in Beijing that compatriots on both sides of the strait are linked by blood ties. He said he believes that postal bureaus on both sides of the strait will work together for a better future.

Lin Feng-cheng, vice chairman of Taiwan's ruling Kuomintang Party, said at the ceremony that having direct links is a big accomplishment that will benefit people on both sides of the strait. The official acknowledged the move has come late, but said it is still to be valued.

Following the civil war, all transport by air and sea from Taiwan could only enter the mainland through a third place. But under an agreement signed last month, the mainland will open 63 ports and Taiwan will open 11 harbors for direct cross-strait shipping. Also, there will be more than 100 weekly flights between the two sides.

The direct links reflect a marked improvement in relations that began with the swearing-in of Ma Ying-jeou in May. In sharp contrast to his predecessor Chen Shui-bian, Ma favors tightening cross-strait economic ties and moving aggressively to reduce tensions.



Cross-strait relations entered a new era Monday.

Xinhua Photo

One-day return trip now possible

By Jin Zhu

The start of daily direct air, shipping and postal services has realized the dream of making a return trip between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan in one day.

Since direct passenger flights were launched December 15, travel from Beijing and Shanghai to Taipei has been reduced by 1,000 kilometers each, saving on travel time by about an hour and twenty minutes.

"Before the opening of direct air travel, I first had to get an endorsed ticket in Hong Kong. Only then would I be allowed to fly to Taipei. Now, it has become more convenient. Direct cross-strait flights not only save time, but also make travel much cheaper," Hu Hui, a businessman in Beijing, said.

According to the Travel Agents' Association of Taiwan, the price of group tours from the mainland to Taiwan is expected to fall by almost 3 percent after the opening of direct flights.

"Take the eight-day tour from

Shanghai to Taiwan for example. The current cost is 10,000 to 11,000 yuan. This will go down to 9,000 yuan in the near future," Yao Daguang, the association director, said. Thus, the number of tourists from the mainland is expected to increase significantly, he said.

Taiwanese residents are also expected to travel more frequently across the strait. "Because it is possible to make a round trip in a day, more Taiwanese working in the mainland will become accustomed to going home on weekends," Zhang Qikai, a journalist in Taiwan, said.

On top of this, the cost and duration of shipping and postal services will also improve.

According to the agreement, mail and parcel will be sent directly to the other side by air or sea. "Since the things will no longer have to pass through Hong Kong, the service will become much more efficient. Post sent by express service in the morning will be received around midday," Zou Wei, a post office staff in Tianjin, said.

Expert: Cross-strait moves must not be rushed

The benefits to tourism and business will enhance understanding after decades of hostility and suspicion. It is far from full normalization, let alone reunification, but with patient nurturing of the new links, there is unlikely to be any turning back.

Events have moved quickly since Ma Ying-jeou took office earlier this year. Last month, Chen Yunlin, Beijing's leading negotiator on Taiwan affairs, became the most senior mainland official to visit Taiwan since the communist revolution. His visit paved the way for the transport and trade agreements that have taken effect. Taiwan has since indicated it will simplify cross-strait family reunions.

Events have moved too quickly for many Taiwanese, who remain divided about closer relations. Violent protests against Chen Shui-bian and his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which favors independence, are reminders of that. DPP suspicion of the action of Ma and his Kuomintang Party,

which favors closer relations with the mainland, is understandable after recent events.

Moves to cement the new ties are a logical next step. But they must not be rushed and the process must be handled carefully if they are to lead to reunification. Ma is right to have acknowledged that there are challenges and differences to overcome.

Direct transport links have understandably led to concern about the economic effect on Hong Kong – a transit point for about 5 million cross-strait passengers each year. Given that the number of additional direct flights is perhaps only 20 percent of the total, Taiwanese officials may be right to play down the impact. Better relations and greater economic activity across the strait will benefit Hong Kong. At the end of the day, the national significance of improved relations between Beijing and Taipei overrides everything else.

– "Leader," commentator with the *South China Morning Post*



ONE NIGHT IN BEIJING

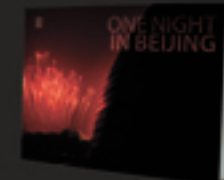
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China suffers first defeat at WTO

By Huang Daohen

China had its first defeat at the World Trade Organization (WTO) Monday as the high court rejected Beijing's appeal in a dispute over duties on car parts.

Cars made in China must contain at least 40 percent Chinese-made parts, otherwise they are taxed at the same rate as imported cars. In the Monday ruling, the WTO decided the practice was against WTO rules, upholding original rulings in July when the US, Canada and EU filed complaints.

The Ministry of Commerce said Tuesday that it regrets the WTO decision.

"China has noted the Appellate Body's support for China's treatment of import tariffs on completely knocked down (CKD) and semi-knocked down (SKD) kits, correcting the wrong decision made by the previous panel report," Ministry of Commerce spokesman Yao Jian told a press conference.

"We welcome that, while at the same time regretting that the Appellate Court upheld the other

decisions of the panel."

When China joined the WTO in 2001, it had a maximum tariff of 25 percent on vehicles and 10 percent on auto parts. But in 2004 and 2005 it started to charge car manufacturers importing parts the 25 percent rate if their products contained too few China-made components.

The country explained that the measures are designed to prevent tax evasion by companies importing whole automobiles as auto parts to take advantage of lower tariffs.

Experts warned that the new

WTO ruling could cripple the domestic auto industry. Multinationals may take the chance to side-step the auto import taxes, Wen Yijun, analyst at the Orient Securities, said.

Wen said the disputes over duties on car parts reflect a commercial game among different parties. The three plaintiffs, the EU, the US and Canada, all have great interests in China's auto industry.

"China has its own situation, and so do the other countries. It is impossible for all WTO members to adhere

to one standard. The new WTO ruling will turn China into the world's auto assembly line. Our domestic brands will die," Wen said.

Others believe that the dispute seems more political than economic in nature. "It seems that this car parts row has been highly politicized, as most foreign auto makers in the country, from General Motors to Volkswagen AG, have been stepping up local production to cut costs," Yi Junfeng, an analyst with Changjiang Securities, told Reuters.

3G license due soon

By Wang Yu

The government will issue third-generation (3G) mobile phone licenses at the end of this year or early 2009, Li Yizhong, Minister of Industry and Information Technology, said at a conference last Friday. Telecom industry investors may be excited about the announcement.

The announcement was the first official word on a 3G timetable.

Li also said the long-awaited progress will attract 200 billion yuan of investment in the upgrade and expansion of the network next year. The money is expected to stimulate the economy and help the country to get through the global financial crisis.

"Now that the reorganization of mobile carriers is over, it is the time for us to issue licenses as promised before," Li said. As the country's biggest mobile carrier, China Mobile will be given license to operate the TD-SCDMA, which is a homemade technology. China Unicom will take the license for the WCDMA system and China Telecom, which took over China Unicom's CDMA service, will operate the CDMA2000 system.

"These three companies should submit a plan or how they will develop 3G services so we can prevent an overlap or duplicated investment in the network's construction," Li said.

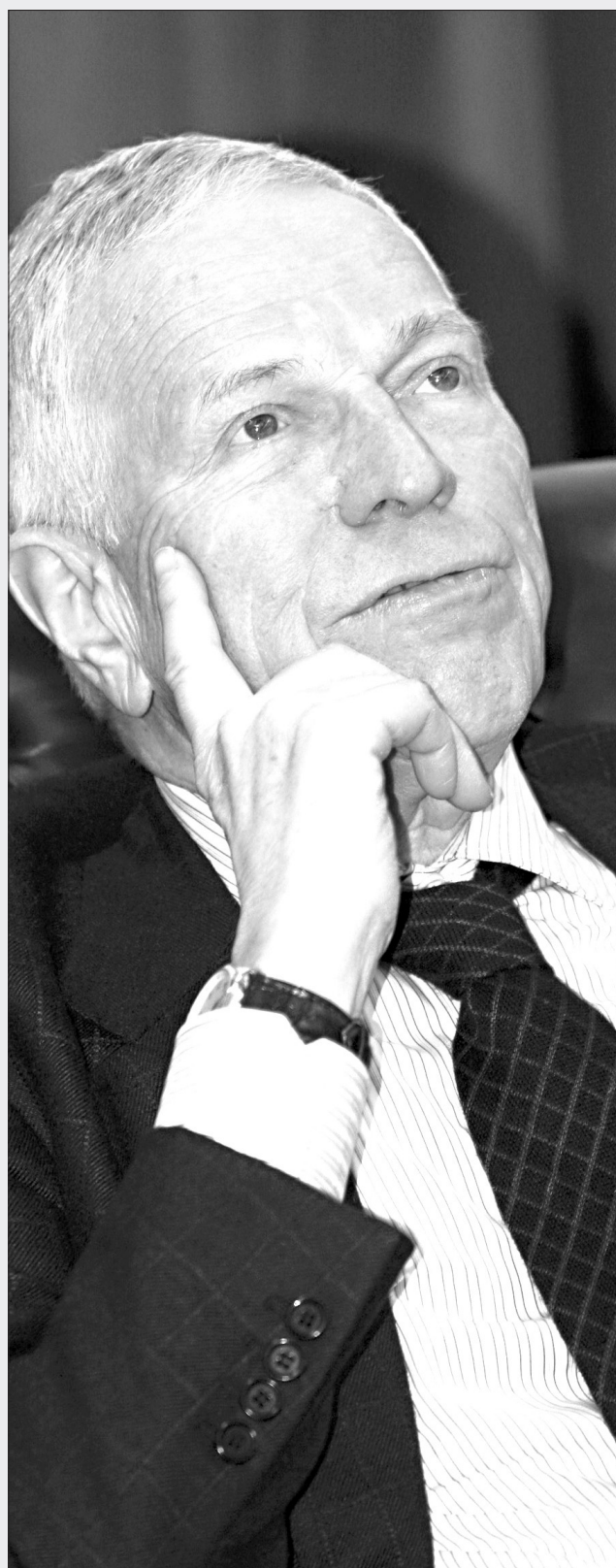
The other two 3G formats require large patent fees. Attempting not to be depended on western mobile technology, China announced its TD-SCDMA to the International Telegraph Union in 1998. Development of the technology was lead by IT company Datang.

On January 20, 2006, the Ministry of Information Industry, now succeeded by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, formally declared TD-SCDMA to be China's 3G standard.

China Mobile started its TD-SCDMA service as a test run in Beijing and other seven Olympic co-host cities April. Many staff of the Beijing Organizing Committee were given TD-SCDMA phones. Though many users complain that the signal was unsteady and the network still did not cover the whole city, such problems are expected to be solved with government backing.

The country's 650 million mobile phone users have been left behind in the 3G race. Though the voice service will still be the main function of the carriers, new multimedia services require a good plan.

Phelps says country unlikely to bail out West



Edmund Phelps

Photo provided by B-Doing

By Huang Daohen

China is unlikely to be the rescuer for the West in this financial crisis, Edmund Phelps, the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize for economics, said Wednesday.

Phelps was in town to attend the third China International Cultural & Creative Industry Expo, running from Wednesday to Sunday.

Beijing Today reporters met Phelps Wednesday and talked about the current financial crisis.

Q: Should China buy cheap US assets using its huge foreign exchange reserve?

A: The Chinese sovereign fund has made some relatively large investments in the US, like buying Blackstone Group and some private properties. But the returns have ranged from poor to disastrous. However, US assets are relatively safe for their better mobility. I've learned this morning that China started to buy US government bonds again.

Which industry to invest in is a hard question to answer. During the past 10 years, investments in the US have had a very low yield. The housing industry, for instance, is a good choice – if you want to lose half your investment. Stocks and funds have also showed a downward trend the past decade.

It's better to build a storage place in the US and find a way to accumulate wealth gradually.

Q: Why is China's policy to encourage exports rather than stimulate domestic consumption?

A: This is a difficult question. Most Chinese consumers, unlike the Americans, lack a passion for consumption. The Chinese government should stimulate domestic consumption in the current financial crisis to reduce pressure on exports.

One way to stimulate consumption is economic incentive – to reward consumers. For example, if one consumer spends 100 yuan, the government pays back 2 or 3 yuan as a reward.

Q: Aside from capital injection, what should the US government do to end the financial crisis?

A: The most crucial task for the government is to keep the financial system healthy and reorganize it. Funding the troubled banks is not the most important task. I think the government should try to prevent them from falling into a deeper economic crisis. The government should introduce "first aid" measures instead of giving a brain operation.

There are two emergency measures, one is to stimulate consumption and the other is to stimulate investment. In the case of the US, I would recommend investment.

Q: Can China rescue the Western economy?

China ushered in a new era of low interest rates. Its economic development has become a model for many developing countries as China has solved the employment problems of such a huge population.

Besides, its rapid development has raised the level of technology use and development, which also brings greater convenience to its neighbors. So China has contributed to the world economy.

However, I think the possibility [of China helping the West] is quite small. For the US and Western countries, it is, of course, a good thing to have a big trading partner like China. But as to what extent China can change the negative impact of the financial crisis, I hold a conservative view.

Q: When do you expect the financial crisis to end?

A: I am glad you used the word expect, because no one can give precise information on this. It is only when the financial industry is back on the right track [that it will end].

The other problem is the unemployment rate, which is relatively high now, and if it can go back down to 8 percent or lower, we may see it come to an end.

However, the overall recovery of the economy still has a long way to go. It may take years.

Pajamas in public: local charm or embarrassment?

By Huang Daohen

People in the habit of going to work in their pajamas should watch out. Leaders of a Shanghai community are trying to fight locals' longstanding habit of going out in their nightwear, the Shanghai-based *Youth Daily* reported.

The Rixin neighborhood committee, a volunteer outpost of the Public Security Bureau in the city's northeastern Hongkou District, has launched a campaign to discourage city residents' love affair with wearing pajamas in public.

"We are telling people not to wear pajamas on the street because it looks uncivilized," the newspaper quoted Guo Xilin, the director of the campaign, as saying.

She said the practice is an embarrassment to the city. "People should keep pajamas in the bedroom. This is just visual pollution."

The committee guidelines also say that men should be discouraged from wearing white socks with black shoes. Another summer fashion – male trouser legs rolled

up to the knees to cool off – was criticized as well.

Rixin's Pajama Purge Campaign has divided the locals. While Guo called pajamas visual pollution, Zhou Miaomiao, a local resident working in a multinational company, said wearing pajamas in public was no big deal and was perfectly acceptable. "Pajamas are also a type of clothing. The point is that it's comfortable," she said.

Rixin's campaign is not the first of its kind. In the 1990s, the Shanghai government put up signs and ran information drives telling people not to stroll around in their nightwear. But the campaign's managers eventually gave up trying to win the war.

The Shanghaiese habit of wearing pajamas in public emerged alongside the country's economic reforms over the past 30 years. As people got richer, the practice became more common: having a smart pair of pajamas is a sign of prosperity, because a person can afford not to sleep in tattered clothes.



This woman would have to give up her pyjamas now. IC Photo

Death Education worry parents

By Zhang Dongya

"If this were the last day of your life, what would you want to say?" This was a question thrown during a course on death at a high school in Kunming, Yunnan Province. All primary and secondary schools in the province set up "death education" classes at the beginning of the school year. But since death is a taboo topic, the course has become controversial among parents.

After watching a video about human life from fertilization to birth, psychologist Mu Jie asked students to write a will in class at the Kunming No. 1 High School. Some students wrote, "I saved my pocket money in the bookcase," while others said, "You have only one life" or "Life is valuable."

The course is included in the "life, survival and living" project of Yunnan's Department of Education, which aims to help students value life and cope in an emergency.

"We hope that through such educational activities, students will better understand death and more importantly, love and treasure their life," Mu, the psychologist, said.

Most students have found Death Education interesting and meaningful, and say they have a better understanding of the value of life.

Parents, however, are uneasy. Many said the teenage years were too early to be talking about death. They also worried the course would cause fear and anxiety in their children. Others said they felt sad when they saw on their child's will previously unexpressed thoughts and feelings.

Zhao Baifan, director of the counseling center at the Education Research Institute of Yunnan, said death has long been a taboo topic in Chinese culture, which makes it a subject of curiosity among youngsters. She said death education is necessary to satisfy that curiosity, otherwise misconceptions about death may lead to more teenage suicides.

Teachers say parents should not be oversensitive to the issue or underestimate children's capacity to deal with the subject.

Comment

Fashionable and a local charm

In this day and age, anything goes. Look at how it is fashionable to wear clothing that looks like lingerie – lace that peeks out from T-shirts and other tops. On the other hand, for most Shanghaiese, wearing pajamas outside the house has become a way of life rather than a fashion statement. To outsiders, the phenomenon is part of the city's charm.

– Cindy Woo, local resident

It's cute!

I think it's cute, as long as the pajamas fit well and are in good, clean condition. These people are simply breaking social norms, not committing a crime. It's amusing how people react when someone breaks a social norm – try standing backwards in a crowded elevator and see how uncomfortable it is!

– Zhang Hongwei, government employee

Embarrassing to see

Having spent many years in and out of Shanghai, I must say it is embarrassing to see people in their pajamas. To

"foreigners" as you call us, it looks like they can't afford day clothes. Even some hotel rooms have signs saying not to wear pajamas in the lobby.

– Felix, engineer in Shanghai

Respect local practice

Dirty? No offense, but ideally, the bed is the cleanest place in the house if the sheets are changed every few days. Pajamas shouldn't be any dirtier than street clothes, really. I think it's kind of wrong that the director, Guo, doesn't respect local practice.

– Roberto Chen, editor

Not visual pollution

I've lived in China more than six years. It's the same in Beijing. I find it cute and original. I wonder what's better: a cute Asian in pajamas or a fat teen in hip hop clothes – or worse a mini skirt? You decide.

I disagree with the visual pollution comment. At least we know the one in pajamas is probably just going to grab some breakfast and coffee and then heading back home to chill and dream.

– Jeff Bass, teacher from the US

BEIJING TODAY serving the expat community

Expat News
Stories of the
city's expats

Community
Building a
harmonious
international
society

Commerce
& Consulates
Promoting unity
between
all peoples

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今日北京
BEIJING TODAY

Luxury soap born in the kitchen



Moore and Zhang plan to have another baby in their little soap kingdom.

Photos provided by Song Nannan

By Wang Yu

Friends of Darren Moore always have fun in the Canadian soapmaker's courtyard, especially in the summer when they hold a barbecue. Moore and his wife Zhang Ping moved to this place four years ago, and now it has since become their soap kingdom.

Looking for a skin solution

Moore used to work as a marketing director for Bell, Canada's biggest IT company. He came to China in 1996 to join a company project in Yantai, Shandong Province, and there fell in love with Zhang who was on the same work team.

The company offered Zhang a transfer to Canada, but she gave it up because she wanted to stay in China with Moore. Moore also chose to stay in the country when the time came for him to move back to North America. The couple moved to Beijing, where Moore worked for a dot-com company.

"Here I can take on more challenges and I like competing, especially with big guys," Moore said.

But in the winter, Moore began to develop skin problems. "I have the driest skin on the planet. When I was a kid, they called me the snake because my skin peeled," he said.

To solve the problem, he tried everything, including the most expensive treatment available in town. But nothing worked. "Because of that, I started doing research and learned that the cosmetics industry is not there to help you. Companies just try to make you believe their products



Moore's soaps contain various types of essential oils.

can help. So I had to deal with the problem myself," Moore said.

The first thing he did was to stop using commercial products; he made his own soap using virgin olive oil mixed with alkalis. Several months later, his skin improved. "The less chemicals there are that touch your body, the more healthy you are," Moore said.

An unexpected business venture

Moore has a solid educational background in the sciences, which made it easy for him to understand the basics of soap making. He and Zhang performed experiments in their kitchen and developed their own formula.

Moore shared his experience online and posted photographs of his handmade soap. He unexpectedly received an order from the

US for soap worth US \$200 (1,400 yuan). More orders came and it became the start of a new business.

Unlike big brands, Moore uses a method called "cold crafting," which applies no additional heat during the manufacturing process. The traditional practice of soap making takes fresh, specially chosen flowers and plant oils, gently warms them to their melting points and then slowly mixes them with an alkaline solution. "That's how people made soaps hundreds of years ago," Moore said.

Pretty soon, the demands of Moore's soap business exceeded the capacity of his kitchen. The couple decided to move to the suburbs and start a factory. "We built everything here all by ourselves: the power system, water system and heating system. I also planted all the trees out-

side," he said. His is only the world's third cold crafted soap manufacturer, Moore said, an achievement he is proud of.

Most of the soaps in the factory, are exported to the US and England. But Moore's online business is still doing well. "We will put up stores under the brand Organic Earth in the city next year," he said. On top of this, Moore also offers his manufacturing services to help clients build their own label.

Sharing a lifestyle

Through his business, Moore has gained an insight into the cosmetics industry. "Most companies add synthetic ingredients and preservatives to keep their products fresh. These two elements can kill everything (good and bad bacteria) and are harmful to our skin," Moore said. "Most customers are misled as big brands use fancy names to identify the ingredients on their labels. But these don't bring any benefits."

Moore's products, considered luxury soap, are more expensive than those people find in local stores, but Moore is confident in their quality. "These soaps are for those who care about the relationship between their bodies and the environment. Through my products, I also want to introduce my lifestyle to others," he said.

Though his family lives far from the metropolis, Moore is happy in their simple but healthy lifestyle. "You cannot bring money with you to the grave, so you must do something that you enjoy," he said.

Cans that are not empty after all

By Zheng Lu

Containers are such a mundane yet important part of our lives. We buy things that come in packages of all colors, sizes and shapes, and after extracting our goods, the container ends up in the garbage bin. But for Christine Fentz, a Danish who has kept 55 empty tin cans for a decade, a product's container has indescribable value.

Fentz produces containers mainly to hold air the most important element for life. Her idea was borne out of the massive hysteria about how the world would change at the turn of the millennium, when the 20th century became the 21st century.

Fentz's introduction of her artwork at the Danish Cultural Institute in Beijing last week brought to mind the fairytale "The Emperor's New clothes." Her audience needed to use their strongest imaginative powers to give form and meaning to air, which no one bothers to think about on a regular day. Air brings nostalgia and reminds people of experiences a decade ago, Fentz said.

As soon as she thought of the "air-can" idea in December 1999, Fentz got in touch with a factory that manufactures tins for canned food. She asked for cans that were empty and sealed. "They gave me 55 cans with December air inside," Fentz said. The procedure seemed simple. To the artist however, the cans not only contained air but a great idea.

The significance of this event would be revealed years later when the air-cans went on their first exhibit in Hungary in 2007. Fentz and another curator, Randi Schmidt, invited artists from other countries to design dresses for the cans. When word of this project spread, fans of the other artists were inspired to follow suit and seal air inside cans.

Fentz said she wants to continue working on her collection. In 2006, she and Schmidt invited 26 artists from Denmark and China to contribute and the group created more air-cans. "Perhaps I will all sell them someday as a collective work of art," Fentz said.

Collecting air is just one of Fentz's works. She spends most of her time engaging in theatrical art, including dance and interactive theater. She will soon be going on performance tours – but this time her air-cans will not follow.



Christine Fentz and her air containers
photo by Joergen Ingvarsdén

US might stay away from Shanghai World Expo

By Huang Daohen

The US will be absent from the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, the first world fair hosted by China, if no immediate and decisive actions are taken, a team of US expo veterans has said.

"Without immediate and decisive action on the part of American industry leaders, the US will be glaringly absent from this global celebration," BH&L Group said in a recent statement, adding this would not only bring global humiliation to the US, but would also deal a serious blow to the sale of US products and services on the local market.

Scheduled to start on May 1, 2010, and continuing for six months, the world fair is forecast

to be the largest in history. It has already attracted 183 countries and 45 international organizations, according to the Shanghai Expo's official site.

But the US may not participate due to a 1990 Congressional legislation, co-authored by Senators Neil Smith and Ernest Hollings, which forbids the use of public funds for participation in expos.

The legislation pointed out that funding such events was not in the best interest of American taxpayers. Following this legislation and an embarrassing withdrawal from the Millennium Exposition in Hanover in 2000, the US has been largely absent from the world expo stage, and has not been a

member of the Bureau for International Expositions (BIE), the international treaty organization that oversees expos.

Bob Jacobson, an official with the BH&L Group said the group is lobbying to feature a US Pavilion at the 2010 Expo.

"Although the old law prohibits government funding, we have good connections in the new one (government) and that could change. Unfortunately, they aren't in charge until February," he said.

Private sector funding and leadership are also being sought, Jacobson said. "But time is running out for developing and ensuring an effective presence of the US in what is supposed to be the largest market

opportunity for all countries."

The spokesman for the US Consulate General in Shanghai said yesterday "the US Government very much hopes to participate in the 2010 World Expo."

Due to the congressional law, the spokesman said all US Pavilions have been funded by the corporate sector, and for the 2010 World Expo, the State Department authorized only one group to raise funds for the US Pavilion, which is led by Ellen Elia-soph and Nicholas Winslow.

"They remain active on fund raising efforts. The US government continues to support their efforts and hopes they will ensure a successful US presence in Shanghai in 2010," he said.

Foreign companies form volunteer alliance for Sichuan reconstruction

By Jin Zhu

The American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai has launched China's first volunteer alliance among foreign companies to organize charitable activities in Sichuan's earthquake-hit areas.

The Make a Difference Alliance, launched December 5, will run in association with UK-based charity Save the Children.

The alliance's first project - Safe-guarding the Health of Rural Children in the Earthquake Zone - is aimed at improving the quality of community-led health initiatives for children under age 5 in the 15 communities worst hit by the May 12 quake.

"The project will provide medical supplies to the communities and train local volunteers in children's healthcare and nutrition," Li Ping, Save the Children's director of corporate affairs and child rights, said.

The project, which will run until the end of 2009, will include a series of "disaster risk reduction" training programs to raise residents' awareness of the risk of natural disasters and teach them how to respond.

The chamber said Johnson & Johnson Medical China was the first company to sign up for the project.

"Besides providing medical devices, the company will also send staff as volunteers to earthquake-hit areas to teach local people about preventative care," David Fu, director of corporate affairs at Johnson & Johnson Medical China, said. The activities will begin in January, he said.

The chamber, whose members and employees have already donated nearly 400 million yuan in the quake's aftermath, said the alliance is designed to encourage firms and their employees to organize charitable activities and campaigns across the country.

The chamber also aims to help its member-companies set up their own employee volunteer programs in the future, Brenda Foster, the chamber president, said.

"We hope more foreign companies could join the alliance to promote the culture of volunteerism," she said.

Angels light up the season



Santa Claus and children dressed as angels perform at the Pacific Century Place's Christmas tree lighting ceremony last Friday. Some of the children are from poor rural and urban areas supported by the Place's and Operation Blessing China, a Christian NGO.

Photo by Hei Jianjun

Deutsche Borse opens Beijing office

By Han Manman

Deutsche Borse, the Germany-based security exchange group, opened its representative office in Beijing last Friday to further strengthen and expand its foothold on the Chinese market.

The exchange group's move came despite signs that China's economy is being hit by the global financial crisis, including November export figures that declined for the first time in more than seven years.

"Opening during the global financial crisis shows our strong confidence in the Chinese

market," the group's deputy CEO Andreas Preuss said.

The office brings Deutsche Borse's expertise in securities trading to a growing number of Chinese companies, the company said in a statement. The group covers the entire security exchange process from trading and clearing to settlement and securities custody. It also offers market data, indices and analyses.

The China Securities Regulatory Commission on September 26 approved the runner of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange to set up its Beijing office, with Wu Jianhong as Chief Representative

Officer, the statement said.

Frank Gerstenschlager, a member of the company executive board responsible for the cash market, said the group would place China's high-tech companies at its focal point, especially those in the fields of clean energy, renewable resources and environmental protection.

Currently, 13 Chinese companies are listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, one of the world's largest stock exchange centers whose turnover makes up 90 percent of Germany's total.

Deutsche Borse has established business partnerships with several

Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization begins operation

By Venus Lee

The world's second regional space cooperation organization began operation here Tuesday, 16 years after the idea was first put forward.

The Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) aims to promote multilateral cooperation in space science and technology and its applications, such as earth observation stations, satellite navigation and telecommunications, disaster management and environmental conservation, according to a statement issued after the founding ceremony Tuesday. APSCO will also provide assistance to its members in space research, technological application and personnel training and upgrading, it said.

The organization, headquartered in Beijing, has nine member-states: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand, Turkey and China. It is the second regional space cooperation organization in the world after the European Space Agency.

APSCO President Angsumal Sunalai, speaking during the founding ceremony, called on more Asia Pacific countries to join the organization. He also said he hoped the Chinese government could extend more help to the organization.

Because investing in space projects takes an enormous amount of time and money, China wants to work alongside other countries in harnessing resources in outer space.

"China will actively support APSCO and will work with other countries for better exchanges and cooperate with Asia Pacific countries for the peaceful development of outer space," Sun Laiyan, director of the China National Space Administration, said. "The formation of APSCO will also promote economic and social development in the region," he said.

The organization has evolved from the Asia Pacific Multilateral Cooperation in Space Technology and Applications, which came into being when a memorandum of understanding was signed between China, Pakistan and Thailand in 1992. In 2005, the APSCO convention was signed in Beijing.

Representatives from Argentina, Malaysia, the Philippines, Russia and Sri Lanka also attended the founding ceremony Tuesday.

Yin Yang Community gives expats a lifeline

By Annie Wei

Shunyi's expat community is regarded as lacking contact with locals. With their villas, drivers and extravagant shops, these residents seem to live in a bubble. Here enters Yin Yang Community Center, a well-being center that offers visitors an East-meets-West cultural experience.

The center, which opened only four months ago, has a full calendar of activities: therapeutic massages, chiropractic services, tai chi, tea tasting, yoga, dance and painting classes. It is located in a renovated courtyard next to Shunyi's Hegezhuang village, which provides residents easier access to activities held more frequently in town, said the center's general manager, Rachael Sherman.

Many people who live there are the spouses of CEOs or diplomats who are not allowed by law to work in China. They may have led full and exciting lives in their home countries, but are finding it difficult to adapt here or get involved in the local community because of cultural or language barriers, Sherman said.

She said the center is trying to help these people find direction in their lives by providing them a space to explore another part of themselves, reconnect with their body or creative side and meet other people within the com-



The Yin Yang Community Center

Photo provided by the Yin Yang Community Center

munity. The Traditional Chinese Medicine classes, for example, have attracted many attendees.

The center looks for experienced instructors for its programs, something that is not always easy to achieve, Sherman said. Luckily, its owner Lisa Minder-Wu, who has lived in China for 15 years, is well connected. She also owns The Orchard, a popular restaurant among the expat crowd.

Minder-Wu, a former journalist, was recognized by Chaoyang District last year for her work on rural area development. She and her husband, Wu Yuntao, founded The Real Life Company that renovates courtyard houses by combining traditional Chinese architecture with the comforts of Western living. The couple is at work with a Shunyi village on a project that aims to give expats more housing options while stim-

ulating the local economy. They are renovating several courtyard houses in the village to be rented out for one to 10 years. The project will augment the income of villagers, who still maintain ownership of the property. So far, four courtyards have already been renovated and rented out, Sherman said.

To find out more about the Yin Yang Community Center, check out yinyangbeijing.com.

Beijing to go dark for Earth Hour

By Jackie Zhang

Beijing will join the annual Earth Hour for the first time on March 28. On that day, residents, businesses and government offices worldwide are asked to switch off unnecessary lights and electrical appliances for one hour – a move to raise awareness of the need to fight climate change.

Earth Hour is a global event initiated by environmental group World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and is held on the last Saturday of March. So far, 74 cities in 62 countries have promised to participate in next year's event. Besides Beijing, other Chinese cities that have signed up are Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Earth Hour in China also aims

to support the country's energy efficiency target of 20 percent by 2010, and provide inspiration to citizens and business to reduce carbon emissions.

"China has done a commendable job of raising the level of environmental awareness and energy-saving know-how among the public," Dermot O'Gorman, WWF China's country representative, said. "Earth Hour is an opportunity for cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong to showcase China's advancement to a global audience."

Earth Hour kicked off in Sydney last year, in which over two million people participated and lights were turned off for an hour at major land-

marks like the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbor Bridge.

Around 50 million people have participated in this year's event. Among them was Penina Moce, who lives in Kabara, a remote island in the Fijis. Kabara Island residents, which joined Earth Hour this year, are worried about climate change because rising temperatures have raised the island's coastline and reduced their corn crop and fish catch.

"We don't have electricity on the island, but live on generators. In order to support the event, we shut off the generators for one hour," Moce said. "Although we only turned off the lights for one hour, it reminded the people of Fiji

that in this world, we are all connected. We need to work together to fight climate Change."

Ma Weidu, a popular relic collector and connoisseur, is one of the next year's event promoters in Beijing. "As someone over 50, I can clearly feel the effects of climate change along with the rapid social development. I think we must do something and leave an environmentally friendly world to our children," he said.

Ma said that on March 28, he will turn off all the lights and electrical appliances in his house. "During that one hour, I will take a walk outside. Without electricity, there should be many more interesting things to do," he said.

Shoots and Roots help stray cats

By Gan Tian

Wang Shiqiang, a senior high school student at the Bayi Middle School, has been busy hunting down stray cats on weekends. In September, he joined Roots and Shoots, an educational program that is helping take care of stray cats.

The group, with 200 members in Wang's school alone, aims to control the birth of stray cats and find homes for them. Members go out on the streets and hunt for cats. Some members keep their find, while the other cats are put on the waiting list for homes. In the mean-

time, the cats visit the veterinarian for neutering.

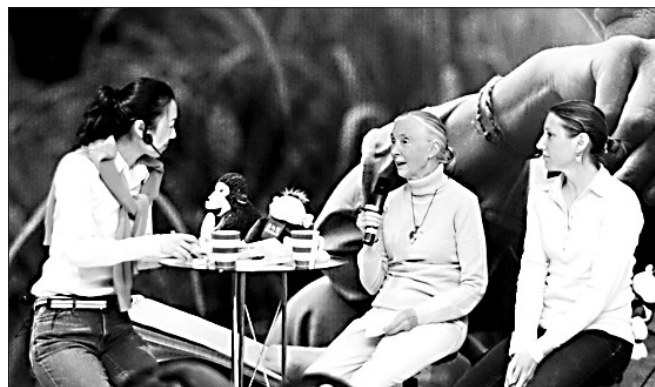
Roots and Shoots is an international environmental and humanitarian education program that works for positive change in local communities, among animals and the environment. It was started by Jane Goodall, the English scientist known for her research on chimpanzees. The group entered China in 2000 and now has more than 100 teams in Beijing alone.

"It might be a couple of friends who have the same interest, or an entire class doing the same project," Erika Helms, the president of

Roots and Shoots China, said.

People who are interested in joining can visit a local office. There they will be given a flag and a handbook on environmental protection. Teams can nominate projects they want to work on, but often, the group concentrates on local issues. Each team reports to the office annually, and the best-performing one can meet Goodall.

Roots and Shoots has offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Nanchang, with more than 400 registered groups from kindergarten to university. It soon plans to expand to smaller cities.



Jane Goodall (middle) talked about Beijing's Roots and Shoots teams on an event. Photo provided by Jane Goodall Institute

Event

Do-it-yourself Jewelry

Jingjing Sang, a designer who specializes in turning little popokakas into bling, will share her secret with accessory lovers.

When: December 21, 3-4 pm

Where: Tree House, Ju'er Hutong, Nan Luo Gu Xiang, Dongcheng District

Call: 6407 1665

Cost: 39 yuan per person

UK National Film and Television School Showcase

In a three-day showcase, Space for Imagination presents 24 of the best films from the UK's National Film and Television School. The event features eight documentary films, eight animated films and eight feature films.

When: December 21-23, 3-8 pm

Where: Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang Xiaoqu (at the east gate of Tsinghua University), Shuangqing Lu, Haidian District

Call: 6279 1280

Cost: Free

Women's Football

Women soccer players practice and play every Sunday for several hours at the Beijing Geological University. Players of all skill levels are welcome.

When: December 21, 1-5 pm

Where: Women's Football 7788, 29 Xueyuan Lu, Haidian District

Call: 8526 2420 ext 111

Yoga Open Day

Each Sunday, which is yoga "open day," attendees will meet yoga and zen meditation instructors, who can answer their questions. Zen meditation instructors, who have received extensive training in zen monasteries, discuss the traditional path. Classes run all afternoon, with friendly assistants on hand to help in any way possible. The atmosphere is warm and relaxed and attendees are guaranteed to go home with a peaceful mind and a relaxed body.

When: December 21, 2-4 pm

Where: Chan Zhou Yoga Training Center, 1701 Yi Hai Building, Xueyuan Lu, Liudaokou, Haidian District

Call: 159 1081 6634

(By Wei Ying)

Learn Chinese online

By Annie Wei

Foreigners who speak Chinese fluently admit their *putonghua* becomes rusty once they leave China and they do not have anybody to practice with. Those who live here, meanwhile, complain that their Chinese colleagues would rather speak to them in English. Others say their language skills have stagnated because work leaves them with no time to attend class.

The best solution is to study Chinese online! They can study on their own time. Here are three Web sites to get students started. **StudioChinese.com**

The Beijing-based company, which launched a course for beginners in September, targets

on-demand learners, or people who are specific about what they want to learn.

The only way to learn a foreign language is to speak it, said Marshall Chang, from US, who studied Chinese for more than 10 years and who has also taught the language to foreigners.

"There are many Chinese language programs today and they are all very good," the 28-year-old Chang said. But what students lack is the chance to practice speaking, he said.

The site has teachers available 16 hours each day for on-demand learners. "Most of our students right now are from abroad," Chang said.

StudioChinese charges US \$250 (1,700 yuan) for 30 hours

of lessons.

It is launching a course designed for children in February.

Echineselearning.com

Echineselearning, which entered the industry two years ago, offers Chinese classes on-demand, catering to kids, teens, adult learners and corporations.

Prices vary depending on the course. The site has an ongoing promotion, offering a 50-percent-discount per class and a free trial class.

ChinesePod.com

The site offers free downloads of its podcasts designed for learners at various levels.

Although some people think studying Chinese by way of podcasts is a passive way to learn, it is convenient since stu-

dents can listen to them anytime, anywhere.

ChinesePod also offers one-on-one lessons by Skype or telephone, with a rate of US \$30 (200 yuan) per hour.

To find the platform that best suits a person, Jonathon Palley from ChineseStudio.com said students should evaluate the following factors: how effective the lessons are; if it is designed specifically for foreign students; how good the teachers and trainers are; and how affordable and convenient it is.

Readers who would like to share their experiences in studying Chinese, or who would like to comment on Chinese language schools or Web sites, can send an email to weiyang@ynet.com.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

When can people start purchasing fireworks in Beijing?

Although vendors have not yet started selling on the streets, some fireworks wholesalers have already accepted orders. To get the wholesale price, customers have to order a minimum of 10 boxes. Wholesalers will also deliver orders for free. Note that according to safety regulations, one family can only store one box of fireworks that weighs about 30 kilograms.

Where: Beijing Fireworks Company, 33 Majiabao Lu, Fengtai District

Tel: 8726 2769, 6721 3361

I recently bought a car and do not know much about local parking regulations. What is the punishment for parking in the wrong place? Any suggestions how I can more easily find parking lots?

A driver who parks his or her car in the wrong place will be fined 200 yuan. If the spot has a sign that says "No Parking," aside from paying a fine of 100 yuan, two points will be deducted from the driver's license.

To check for parking spaces around town, go to glsd.com.cn or call 8837 8541, 8837 8542 or 4006505166. The service is only available in Chinese.

I want to get a camera, laptop and speakers and heard from friends that Zhongguancun has the widest selection of digital products. What's the most convenient way to get there from the CBD using public transportation?

You can take Subway Line 10 from Guomao to Haidian Huangzhuang Station. When you get out of the station, you will see a huge shopping center for digital products called E-world. It has numerous stores, as well as an information desk and an ATM machine.

What are Beijing's regulations for ice skating in public places, particularly on lakes? I want to take my daughters out this weekend.

Although some lakes, like Shichahai, have frozen and some people have started skating there, the municipality's ice skating patrol said it is better to wait a bit longer. So far, the thickness of the ice is less than 10 centimeters. When the thickness reaches at least 15 centimeters, the lake will be opened to the public.

(By Wei Ying)

Christmas post office opens

By Jin Zhu

Beijing's first Christmas Post Office opened in Wangfujing's Xindong'an Plaza last week to accommodate the bigger volume of outgoing correspondence this holiday season.

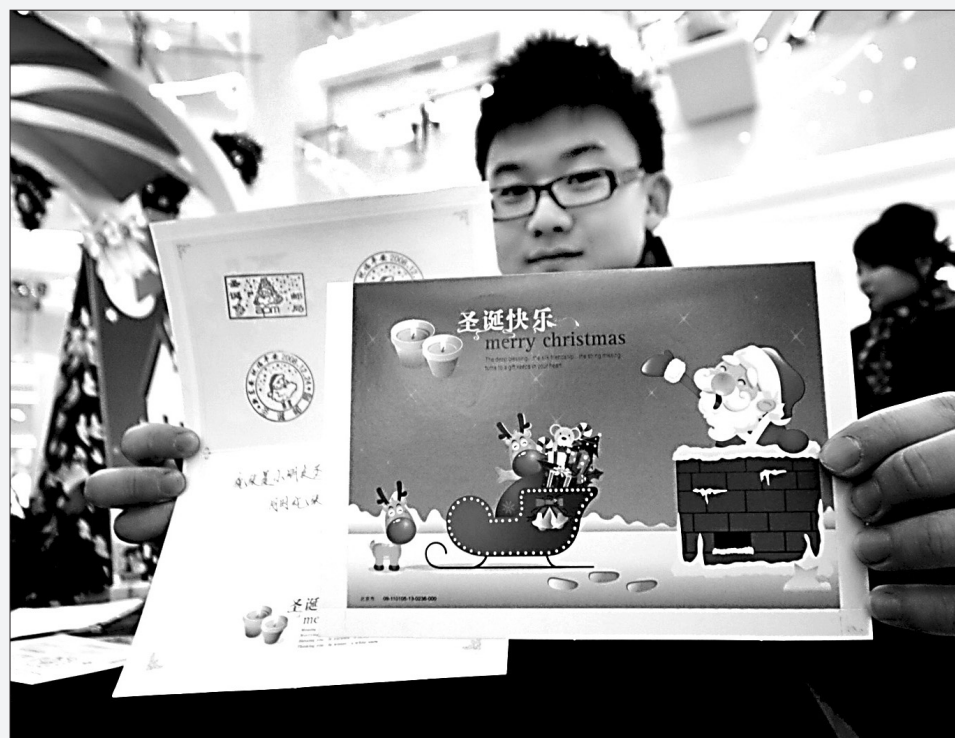
The special post office, which will remain open until December 24, sells greeting cards, postcards and Christmas items in its "work area."

In its exhibition area, there is a postcard-making machine in which customers can create postcards with their photographs.

According to the post office, each letter that goes into its Christmas mailbox will get a specially designed Christmas postmark for free. These letters will be sent out on midnight December 24.

Where: 1/F, Xindong'an Plaza, 138 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

CFP Photo



Panjiayuan holds fair for folk handicrafts

By Zheng Lu

In one stall, a Shaanxi folk artist is busy drawing a New Year picture on a cardboard. In another, visitors will find on display a *thangka*, a Tibetan painting draped in colorful satin.

Around the corner, an ethnic minority woman weaves on a wooden loom. People who drop by the Panjiayuan Antique Market today or this weekend will find a wide array of folk handicraft they may have not seen before.

The First Panjiayuan Trade Fair of Intangible Cultural Heritage Handicrafts runs from December 13 to Sunday. More than a hundred folk artists all over of the country have come to display and sell their crafts. The artistic methods they use are part of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage, most of which date back a few centuries.



The Miao ethnic group's traditional embroidery

Photo by Zheng Lu

"We hope to save the handicraft culture and pass it on through dissemination," Ding Qian, a man-

agement staff at the antique market, said. Apart from discovering handicrafts from different places and made by various ethnic groups, visitors can also watch the creation process and mingle with the artists, Ding said. "Because they will understand the craft more intimately, people will be encouraged to preserve the culture," she said.

Pan Yuzhen, a middle-aged Miao woman, said she learned her people's traditional embroidery at age six. "I thought it was very interesting. For me it was just like playing," she said, "I messed up my grandma's colorful threads everyday while I worked."

The Miao are concentrated in the country's southeast and their embroidery is complicated, but beautiful and delicate. The basic step is to braid at least twelve fine threads into one, then sew the braid

into a pattern on a cloth. The final product becomes part of a lion dance, a monkey or flowers.

In Miao culture, women who are good at needlecraft are the most sought after, Pan said. "Each piece of clothing is a woman's creative product," she said.

Pan said many young Miao have abandoned their traditional practices in recent decades. "Girls leave the mountains to move to big cities and earn money," she said. Many who stay behind do not learn needlecraft. Pan said she wants to start an embroidery school to help young people learn and carry on their group's tradition.

Apart from folk handicrafts, the fair also features brocade made by the Li ethnic group of Hainan Island. Their craft dates back 3,000 years and is evident in clothes made from tree barks. The brocade fair will run until January 18.

When Sofia came to

Since its 2003 release in Portugal, *Sofia's Diary*, which tells the story of a teenage schoolgirl, has won millions of online viewers. It made the jump from Internet show to UK TV earlier this year.

The Sofias may have similar background and experiences, but each country's is quite different — Portugal's is mysterious and the UK's is rebellious. "What is China's Sofia like?" is the question on which the drama will focus this year.



Localization and internationalization

Sofia, as a Portuguese creation, faced localization problems as it went abroad. China's *Sofia's Diary* will be "more international."

Starting last month, Huaso began the search for new talent to fill lead roles. After several rounds of auditions, a 24-year-old graduate from Beijing Film Academy named Xu Yihan won the role of Sofia.

"In my opinion, I am just a common and a plain Chinese college student, which is exactly what they wanted," Xu said.

The Chinese version was adapted by Dingding, who was born in 1985 and published her first novel *The Yearling* this January, which tells the tale of 12-year-old middle school student growing up. "I just finished college life, so I can easily reconstruct the details [of Sofia]," Dingding said.

She said since the way of speaking and characteristics of each role are quite different from the UK's, it is almost an original work. "The UK's Sofia is feisty and rebellious, but the Chinese one is more introverted and implicit, with a little black humor," Dingding said.

Since the name "Sofia" in China is a well-known brand of sanitary "Sufe," the heroine, will encounter a lot of embarrassing moments related to her foreign-sounding but troublesome name — a tricky gimmick for localizers.

Some subplots of the UK's version, like when Sofia finds her ex-boyfriend kissing her step-sister Trisha, and when her best friend, Sean, is shot and killed, are removed in the local version.

In order to keep pace with this worldwide project, the drama producers have added more exotic factors.

A Chinese-Canadian director named Jonathan Lim, 36, was invited to direct the drama. With the main part of the show set in Shanghai, the drama will be shot on location. "Compared to Beijing, Shanghai is more modern and international," the general manager Pu said, noting the need for a more urban feel.

Typical Generation Y

When *Sofia's Diary* first came out in Portugal in 2003, Sofia was a 14-year-old schoolgirl. With a broken family and an unhappy school life, Sofia faced dilemmas everyday.

Then it was adapted for audiences in the US, Germany, Brazil, Chile, Turkey and Vietnam by Sony Pictures Television International. The Sofias followed the Portuguese format, including her family background and general experiences, but in their own countries' characteristics and styles.

The most successful version was the UK's *Sofia's Diary* last year. It tells the story of 17-year-old Sofia who, after an incident in a school chemistry lab, is sent to London to live with her dad and step-mum and step-brother — the "Devil Child" — while she still tries to keep in touch with her friends.

China's *Sofia's Diary* was produced by Huaso Film & TV Digital Production on behalf of Sony Pictures Television International, the company's joint venture, together with local cultural communication companies of Golden Sea Film and Crimson Fore Film.

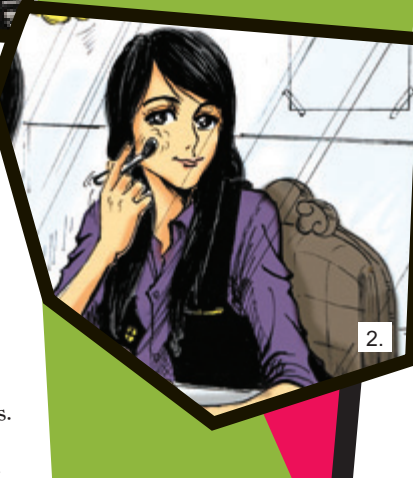
This Sofia is an 18-year-old Beijing girl. She also comes from a divorced family, and will spend her college life in Shanghai after she is admitted to a university in Shanghai. After a similar incident in her high school's chemistry lab, her mom decides to send her to her father's family in Shanghai for continuing supervision. The story then begins in a strange family and a strange city totally unlike her native Beijing.

After *Sofia's Diary* became a great success on social networking Web site Bebo.com, it was acquired by Channel Five for the new digital channel Fiver this April. The director of program for Fiver Hannah Barnes said they expect it to reach 16 to 24-year-olds.

China's *Sofia's Diary* is set to appeal to Generation Y, those born in the 1980s and 1990s. "Generation Y is the Post-80s Generation, the new force in all current trades. Called high-maintenance, tech savvy and pampered, their unique lifestyles and innermost attractions extend in every direction," Enita Pu, general manager of Huaso and producer of the show, said.

Aside from showing Generation Y a mirror of itself, the producers said it gives other age groups a chance to learn more about this disputed group. Pu said during the shows in Portugal, an interesting thing happened when Sofia asked the audience for help at the end of the episode. Rather than helping her, the audience asked for help itself.

"Sociologists found the new generation was more self-centered," Pu said.



to China

By Zhang Dongya
"You think your life sucks? Watch mine ..."
After playing in eight countries including Portugal, the US, Vietnam and the UK, the online drama Sofia's Diary opened here Monday.

Experimental to new media

The series was originally launched in Portugal as an experimental web and mobile service, including an SMS voting service for casting, contests and Music D, an SMS Game — where users help Sofia with her dilemmas — and an interactive Web site with her diary.

According to statistics in 2007, the site has 200,000 visitors per month, and 19,000 mobile subscribers have run for four series on Portuguese state broadcaster Rádio e Televisão de Portugal's channel 2.

In the UK, Sofia's Diary attracts 1,000 comments each day on the show's Bebo channel and character profile pages. "I think it is new media that made Sofia's Diary a success in the UK," Director Lim said, "Youngsters live on the Internet, and Bebo makes Sofia just a common friend of every netizen. They can add Sofia as their friend and chat with Sofia, and also help her with her dilemmas. This interactive format attracts all the users of the social network."

Meanwhile, the online drama itself demands more casual and witty factors to fit its viewers. Humor, voiceovers and undeveloped talent will be major foci in the drama.

"Being funny and lifelike are the most

important jobs," Lim said.

This is the first time an online soap series has been broadcast exclusively over new media in China. It will be released as a five-minute episode every work day, with netizens being allowed to vote on plot twists over the weekend.

The story will go according to the Web voting, and was posted on the official Web site at sufei.tv, hosted by Sina.

"Bebo is a mature social network, with strong support of techniques including video uploading. We have considered local social networks, such like Kaixin.com, but they do not have a video function," Pu said.

The China project will also adopt the Web and mobile services from Portugal's, and will broadcast the series in the vehicle TVs of AirMedia and Beijing All Media and Culture Group.

Sofia is a "virtual person" on the Web, where she updates her blog every day and writes a column for Hongkong-based Milk magazine.

"Yes, Sofia's Diary made several attempts to break local soil. We feel now is the perfect time to launch it as new media platforms are coming of age," the general manager Pu said.



1. Sofia's campus love
2. The cartoon image of China's Sofia
3. Sofia (left) with her classmate in a new school
4. The UK's Sofia's Diary was a big success.
5. Sofia (right) with her father's family
6. Sofia around the world
7. China's Sofia is more introverted.

Photos provided by Huaso

7.



6.

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右

MY OWN WAY

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策展人 • 赵力
Curator • Zhao Li

参展艺术家
Artists

董媛 • 李锐 • 李威 • 尚一心 • 宋逸飞
Dong Yuan • Li Rui • Li Wei • Shang Yixin • Song Yifei

袁欣 • 曾健勇 • 曾杨 • 张文佳 • 张战地
Yuan Xin • Zeng Jianyong • Zeng Yang • Zhang Wenjia • Zhang Zhandi

青年艺术家推荐展
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2008.12.13 — 2009.3.1

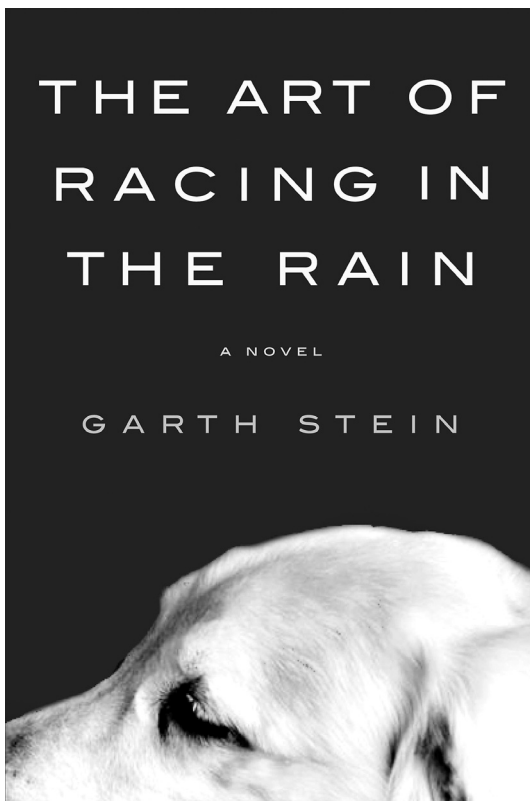
开幕时间 Opening Reception • 2008.12.13 / 14:00

圣之空间艺术中心 • SZ Art Center
北京市朝阳区酒仙桥路2-4号798艺术园区
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www.798artcenter.com

Anything but dog days for Enzo



By Venus Lee

If you ever wondered what your dog is thinking or how it feels as it witnesses the joy and sorrow of its master's life, Garth Stein's *The Art of Racing in the Rain* (336pp, Harper, US \$16.29) offers an answer.

The book tells the trials of the Swift family from a dog's point of view. Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul and an obsession with opposable thumbs. He is self-educated by hours spent in front of the television and by listening to his master, Denny Swift, an up-and-coming racecar driver.

Through Denny, Enzo gains tremendous insight into the human condition, and he sees that life, like racing, is about more than going fast. Using the techniques learned on the racetrack, one can navigate all of life's ordeals.

On the eve of his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through: the sacrifices Denny has made to succeed professionally; the unexpected loss of Eve, Denny's wife; the three-year battle over their daughter, Zoe, whose maternal grandparents pulled every string to gain custody. In the end, despite

what he sees as his own limitations, Enzo comes through heroically to preserve the Swift family, holding in his heart the dream that Denny will become a racing champion with Zoe at his side. Having learned what it takes to be a compassionate and successful person, the wise canine can barely wait until his next life, when he is sure he will return as a man.

The book climbed quickly to the top of the *New York Times* Best Seller List after its publication in March. It was described by Amazon.com as a "heart-wrenching but deeply funny and ultimately uplifting story of family, love, loyalty and hope, it is a beautifully crafted and captivating look at the wonders and absurdities of human life ... as only a dog could tell it."

The seed for the book was planted in Garth's mind 10 years ago when he learned that Mongolians believe the next incarnation for a dog is as a man. "I learned that from a program on the National Geographic channel, so I believe it is true. Not all dogs return as men, they say; only those who are ready. I thought this was a cool concept and I tucked it away thinking I might some day do something with it," Garth said.

He said using a dog as a nar-

rator has limitations and advantages. The limitations are that a dog cannot speak. A dog has no thumbs. A dog cannot communicate his thoughts except with gestures. Dogs are not allowed certain places. However, the dog also has special access: people will say things in front of dogs because it is assumed that a dog does not understand. Dogs are allowed to witness certain things because they are not people and have no judgment.

Garth worked with the idea to give the reader a unique viewpoint. "Enzo, who has very keen powers of observation, is the ultimate 'fly on the wall,'" he said. "It was a lot of fun playing with this point of view. Of course, it all depends upon the reader accepting the premise that Enzo has an 'almost human' soul."

Garth said he believes the energy each of us puts into the world is returned to us. "It's very important to take charge of your life, not to feel like you're a victim of circumstance or fate, but that you are an active participant in your future," he said.

"If we are acting entirely with our best interests in mind – not the best interests of our ego, but the best interests of our soul ... we are acting properly," he said.

What the classics lost in translation

By Jackie Zhang

Cao Xueqin's *The Story of the Stone*, also called *Dream of the Red Chamber*, is widely considered one of the greatest Chinese novels. It looks at feudal society with a focus on traditional culture and the beauty of the language.

While the book's charm has captivated generations of Chinese readers, it is finding a new audience in Western countries. But cultural differences make the popularization of Cao's work a challenge. *Lindaiyu in Shakespeare's Eyes* (226pp, Press of Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, 29 yuan) written by Pei Yu, a literary expert, discusses the cultural differences between China and the West by comparing the language of the original Chinese text and various English translations.

Pei said *The Story of the Stone* is a mirror reflecting life in feudal times. It is necessary for foreigners to read and understand the novel to provide a bridge to mutual understanding. But cultural and linguistic differences prevent English readers from fully digesting an accurate picture.

The book consists of 36 independent treatises, each on a separate topic. Pei looks back on how the story was first introduced to the West, and the stages of *The Story of the Stone*'s complete translation into English. Its influence in France, Germany and Russia are also included in the book.

David Hawks, a British Sinologist, was the best translator, Pei said. He praised Hawks as a language transformation master.

In the book, Pei repeatedly quotes Hawk's translation and



compares it to the original text with his own comments. Readers can compare Cao's language with Pei's remarks and contrast it with how a British fan understood and retold the story.

In addition to commending the translators' efforts to popularize the story, Pei also pointed out mistakes made due to a misunderstanding of Chinese language and culture, such as mistranslations of characters' names, misunderstanding of religion and imprecise translations of poems.

Pei said *The Story of the Stone* is still far from being understood and accepted by Western readers, but wanted Chinese readers to know how the outside world has attempted to understand a national treasure. It is also a back-handed criticism of Chinese youth, who many educators argue are falling far behind the masterful skill of their literary ancestors.

Timezone8 book listing

Timezone8 is a Hong Kong-based publisher, distributor and retailer of books on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. This week, it lists its three top-selling design books for *Beijing Today* readers.

Xu Bing and Cai Guo-qiang: Where Heaven and Earth Meet
By Xu Bing, Cai Guo-qiang, and Zhang Zhaohui, 102pp, Timezone 8, US \$20

This book documents an exhibition Where Heaven Meets Earth, which includes works by artists Xu Bing and Cai Guo-Qiang. Xu is known for his bold, calligraphic, teasing, thought-provoking pieces that challenge preconceptions about written communication; Cai's approach draws on a wide variety of symbols, narratives, traditions, and materials such as feng shui, Chinese medicine, dragons, roller coasters, computers, vending machines and gunpowder.

Andy Warhol in China: The Photographs of Christopher Makos (Hardcover)

By Ai Weiwei, Peter Wise and

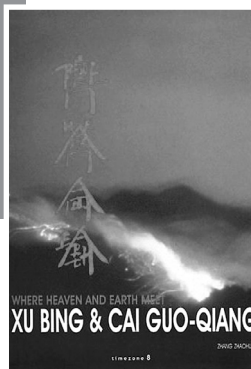
Christopher Makos, 88pp, Timezone 8, US \$75

A documentation of Andy Warhol's 1982 visit to China, this volume offers a unique glimpse of the international pop star by Christopher Makos, his personal photographer. With the advantage of hindsight, this volume becomes complexly ironic – in China in the 1980s, almost no one heard of Warhol.

Shen Ling: Eroticism and Love
By Zhang Zhaohui, Shen Ling and Jia Fangzhou, 500pp, Timezone8, US \$75

Even though Shen Ling does not claim to be a feminist and said she is only interested in representing herself within the context of her sensual experiences, the direction in which her works are developing unquestionably subversive and offers a challenge to patriarchal culture. She paints like a joyful novelist writes, attaching humorous elements to the often ignored in our daily lives. Her unique interpretations allow such humor to find its expression in the language of oil painting.

(By He Jianwei)



Where Heaven and Earth Meet



The Photographs of Christopher Makos



Eroticism and Love

Spicing up xiangsheng with pop

15
Trend

By Annie Wei

Have you ever wondered how Dashan, the Canadian actor, found his fame? It was through *xiangsheng*, also called "crosstalk," a traditional form of Chinese comedy.

Xiha Baofupu, the "hip-hop xiangsheng store," is the only xiangsheng stage in Beijing that draws a primarily young audience. Its door slogan is, "No matches for sale; no cigarette for sale; no cars for sale; no house for sale. Only fun."

Hottest stage in town

On Friday evening at Guangmingge, an old Beijing-style teahouse on Gulou Xi Dajie, people wait outside to see Xiha Baofupu.

Guangmingge is a traditional Beijing teahouse, with a big drum in the middle of two floors, antique furniture and sculpture wood windows.

Some people who popped in the ticketing booth were told tickets were sold out, but they could buy tickets for next Wednesday or Thursday night.

The stage used to sell tickets online or by reservation, but the ticket sales girl said, "We found it unfair for those people who come all their way here."

Although there are 25 tickets for each performance, it has attracted scalpers. One scalper standing at the gate, said they noticed the group two months ago. Its emerging popularity makes tickets at double price.

"It's the most popular place for xiangsheng besides Deyunshe, a most popular stage," one scalper said.

A touch of the modern

Xihabaofupu's use of pop culture sets it apart from other xiangsheng groups.

In one of its more famous performances, the group re-edited the Legend of Lady White Snake. The tale follows Lady White Snake, who is anything but an ordinary human. Originally a white snake demon, she fell in love with a human and wanted to become a human rather than an immortal. They met and lived a happy life, and opened a clinic where they helped many people, but the monk Fahai insisted White Snake was a demon and was bent on destroying her to separate the couple.

In Xihabaofupu's rendition, the story starts with Xuxian and his boy-maid looking for beauties along the lake with the theme from Shanghai-tang, a TV series about mafia and warlords in 1930s Shanghai.

The play is packed with pop music, classic dialogues from teledramas, Internet lingo and neologisms.

When Fahai told Xuxian that Bainiangzi was not human, Xuxian replied, "Hey, she may be ugly but there is no need to call her an immortal."

The audience said it learned about Xihabaofupu through Web sites like Douban, Xianya and Kaixin, or through word of mouth.



Gao Xiaopan (left) is the lead performer in Xiha Baofupu.

Photos provided by Xiha Baofupu

Interview with Gao Xiaopan, lead performer

Gao, 23, has performed xiangsheng since age 7. He was interviewed by 30 newspapers, TV and radio stations because of recent interest in Xihabaofupu.

He was born in Baoding, Hebei Province, but speaks with a Beijing accent. He studied from age 14 with one of the masters of xiangsheng, Feng Chunlin, and afterwards attended xiangsheng schools in Tianjin and Beijing.

When he graduated, he and his friends began performing in Haidian District. Their first foray into the world of the stage flopped, but the owner of Guangmingyuan found Gao and they decided to give it another chance.

Each duo was required to prepare a new show every week, and only those best received by the audience were kept. Audience's laugh is the critical factor if a show works or not, Gao said.

Performances began at Guangmingyuan in May, and by August they were on their way to fame.

At first, there were only 80 tickets sold for each night but now it's a full house. Some audience even asked if they could stay by for three hours.

Gao said he finds inspiration by listening to what people talk about while he is on the bus or the subway.

For example, one skit focuses on Chinese demand for receipts. In one xiangsheng skit, a person

buying an apartment asks the real estate developer for a receipt titled "stationery."

To the Legend of Lady White Snake, Gao added a scene about Lady White Snake and Xuxian's wedding: "A lot of us were curious what their wedding would have been like when we heard the stories as kids. I want to infuse it with our childhood memories," Gao said.

"Xiangsheng is inspired by daily life," Gao said. Behind every laugh is something practical and sarcastic. In his new play Spring Comes, scheduled to open in January 2009, he will focus on the 1980s children.

Although their performances bring in neologisms and jabs at middle-aged Chinese people's English skills, Gao said their performances stick to the tradition.

"I start with tradition and develop something new," Gao said, estimating his content to be 60 percent traditional, 20 percent modern and 20 percent classic.

This week, Gao said they have special nights for excellent xiangsheng created at the end of Culture Revolution.

But no matter how big Xiha-baofupu gets, Gao is insistent on the 20-30 yuan ticket price. There are 30 members in Gao's team and most make their real living by hosting weddings, Gao said.



Xiha Baofupu brings pop to classic comedy

Where: 61 Gulou Xi Dajie, Guangmingge
When: 7:30-10:30 pm every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
Ticket: purchase tickets at the door
Cost: 20 yuan for xiangsheng and 30 yuan for a xiangsheng play
Tel: 6401 1676

Winter wonderland of new technology

White land of tech

Bang & Olufsen (B&O), which designs and manufactures high-end audio products, has over the years offered a large number of white-colored products combining elegant design with the minimalism associated with white. This winter, the company is taking the next step by introducing white covers for all its fabric-covered loudspeakers. Stepping into any B&O retailer in Beijing will transport customers into a winter land of white technologies.

To find fabrics that would meet its requirements, B&O turned to Southern Europe. It attended fashion fairs in Milan, for instance, to look at new fabric trends and treatment techniques. Italian manufacturer Silanco met B&O's requirements, and the two companies have since established a close working relationship to get the right fabric for the loudspeaker cabinets.

B&O, one of the world's strongest brands built on more than 80 years of Danish craftsmanship and innovation, has created a reputation based on its development of unique technologies, beautiful design, creative solutions and quality products.

B&O World Trade China

Where: L215/216, F2, World Trade China, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am-10 pm

Tel: 6505 0330

B&O Oriental Plaza

Where: AA63, F1, Oriental Plaza, 1 Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am - 10 pm

Tel: 8518 6808



Zene's home theater

Photo provided by Zene Technology



B&O's products this season

Photo provided by B&O

By Gan Tian

With 2009 just around the corner and house prices continuing to dip, nothing is more attractive than a brand new apartment in which to start the New Year. The icing on the cake? Your very own home theater and high-quality sound system if space and money permit.

Home cinema

Zene Technology has been designing home theater systems for years, primarily targeting high-end residences and communities.

Zene has a viewing center, where customers can test some of the company's top products. The center, decorated in dark red and gold, exudes luxurious comfort.

"We just ask customers to sit on the sofa, experience our products, then it's up to them to make the decision," Sun Peng, a Zene salesperson, said.

The viewing center could be the size of your living room, with a wall painted white from floor to ceiling on which moving images are projected. The control for the numerous lights are contained in one system, while the computer, music, movie and games are connected to Zene's Media Center.

The Media Center is merely a small black box placed on one corner of the room. It is one of only two home theater systems in the country certified by the Custom Electronic Design and Installation Association, an international trade association of companies specializing in planning and installing home cinemas.

People who purchase Zene's home theater system will get a free movie package. And as part of the company's after-sales service, customers can update their movie selections with as many as 100 new films for 400 yuan. The package includes films not available on the Chinese market. Some of these are by Hong Kong's Bluelight productions, which sell in other shops for 200 yuan per movie.

When users connect their TV line to the home theater system, they can enjoy their favorite soap opera or basketball game as if they were in the cinema. And users will not have to miss a TV program again, because the Media Center can record it once instructions are preset.

Customers who do not have a clue what options are out there can go to Zene with only a piece of paper containing the layout of their home. Zene's personnel will figure out the rest.

Zene Experience Center

Where: Suite 303, Building C, The Ocean International Center, 56 Dongsihuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am - 10 pm

Tel: 5908 1466

NE•Tiger

NE•TIGER brings shoppers warmth and elegance in its new collection. Smooth as a baby's skin, Chinchilla fur gives you the extraordinary touch. The waistband makes you look slim and slender. NE•TIGER uses sex appeal, elegance and light to present this season's fur collection. This high-quality NE•TIGER fur maintains the special features of traditional leather: quality material, exceptional design, fine manufacturing process and special ornaments.

NE•TIGER Oriental Plaza

Where: AA31, UG, New Oriental Plaza, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am - 10 pm

Tel: 8518 6397

NE•TIGER Intime Lotte

Where: 2F-215A, Intime Lotte Department Store, 88 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am - 10 pm

Tel: 5978 5258

Price: 45, 400 yuan



Eating places that have two faces



Chitang

Chitang's interior design
Photo by Wang Yu

By Wang Yu

Beijing is a city of restaurants which offer almost every kind of international cuisine. People dine out not only to savor good food, but also to spend time with friends and discover something new. This week, *Beijing Today* looks at "theme restaurants" that have created unusual dining experiences for customers who are on the lookout for something novel.



Pork cheese roll

Photo by Elvin Liu

Despite its appearance, this is a restaurant – although there are plenty of shower heads. Located between a police station and an elementary school, Chitang means bathhouse and its theme – you guess it – is bathing.

"Many people mistake my restaurant for a bathhouse and ask how much [it costs] for a person to bathe," said owner Li Song, 24, who designed the decor. Chitang's walls are covered in tiles usually found in local bathhouses, while each table is

actually a sink with a glass surface cover. Waiters and waitresses walk around in nightdresses.

The shower heads and water heaters found beside each table do not work. The dispensers on the tables are not filled with liquid soap but ketchup. Chitang has two private rooms; the one built like a bathing pool is popular among the young.

Chitang offers localized versions of Western food, and also serves roasted oysters (48 yuan) and its sister-restaurant

Bianlian's spicy chicken wings (24 yuan). Chitang Pizza (58 yuan), the house specialty, is topped with seafood like sleeve-fish and oysters. Another popular dish is the Tuna Salad (20 yuan), with minced tuna and vegetables sprinkled with black pepper. Its roasted seafood is also recommended.

Like other theme restaurants, the food in Chitang takes a backseat to the novelty of the restaurant decor. Owner Li admits he knows nothing

about cooking. "I don't even know how to deal with a pack of instant noodles," he said. But he obviously knows how to come up with quirky concepts that leave an impression.

Citang

Where: Xinghua Xili, Jiangzhaihou Lu, Dongcheng District

Open: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm for lunch, 5-10 pm for dinner

Tel: 6425 6508

Average cost: 60 yuan per person

Fouding

First-time visitors should not be startled if they see a naked mannequin at the entrance of Fouding. If they just keep going inside, they will discover a hospital-themed dining hall.

Delivery room, disinfection area ... each section of the contemporary loft-style restaurant is named after a hospital room. There are wheelchairs in the corridor, laboratory bottles on the table that contain vinegar and feeding bottles that serve as drink containers.

Fouding specializes in Sichuan cuisine. Suantang Xiaofei yang, or Lamb with Sour Flavor Soup, (38 yuan) which contains mushrooms and bamboo shoots, is highly recommended by regular customers. Fengqing Shousiji (28 yuan) is a popular chicken dish.

The surroundings may feel weird, but no hospital can kill a Sichuan food lover's appetite for spicy food.

Fouding

Where: 6 Xiaguang Li, Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 10 pm

Tel: 5201 1818

Average cost: 80 yuan per person



Mizhi Cuipixia or crispy shrimps



The interior design of Fouding Photos provided by Fouding



Santa Rita

Bed Tapas & Bar

Hidden in a hutong at Jiu Gulou Dajie, Bed Tapas & Bar is a place for people to get together when they want to chat while lying on an old-fashioned bed. The restaurant, decorated with Chinese wooden furniture, creates an atmosphere that seems to zap back diners to the past.

Most of Bed's customers are foreigners. The house specialty wine is the home-made Santa Rita 120 Chardonnay (40 yuan) from Chile. Another popular drink here is the Cuban Mojito (45 yuan), which has a fresh minty flavor.

Diners are welcome to dance to the lounge music if they like.

Bed Tapas & Bar

Where: 17 Zhangwang Hutong, Jiu Gulou Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: 2 pm – 2 am

Tel: 8400 1554

Average cost: 50 yuan per person

Merry Christmas

Song and dance feast+Gifts+pleasantly surprised

Christmas has been quietly approaching footsteps. Beijing Empark Grand Hotel have pleasure and Merry Christmas to you! You are welcome to come and join us in our wonderful moment.

**"Variety show" , "Children's party" ,
Two party tickets on sale ...**

Tel: 8610-88598888-2988 . 2989
Ticket Time: Nov 29, 2008 -Dec 24, 2008 09:00-21:00

69 Banjing road, Haidian district, Beijing China 100097

Photos that bare reality

By Jackie Zhang

Liu Zheng's nude photographs attract a lot of attention and even cause controversy.

Some of these may be seen in "Dream Shock," Liu's solo photo exhibition. "I hope every person who sees my works will be shocked at first, and then break out in a cold sweat. The same feeling experienced by a person who is shocked and suddenly wakes up from a dream," Liu said, explaining the origin of the exhibition's title.

Liu became famous in 2006 after his series on nude Peking Opera performers, photographed in 1996, was circulated online. He was overwhelmed by the criticism he received and the disputes the photographs caused. He was blamed for disgracing Chinese tradition.

Liu said the series was a way to show his disagreement with some of society's conservative traditions. "It was over 10 years ago. I did that only because of rebellion," he said. "Now, when I think of what I did at that time, I still think it was a good attempt. As I get older, I no longer have the courage to do the same thing."

Another reason Liu likes to photograph nudes is that he feels there is no present-day clothing design that suits the human form. "Many traditional Chinese clothes and concepts of art and beauty have been abandoned or transformed. New ones do not fit us. I prefer that people in my works wear no clothes rather than be draped in strange and improper clothes," he said. "Only when they are naked do I feel they are real and honest."

Liu's models only wear clothes when he wants to showcase traditional culture and tradition. Then the audience can see women in skirts designed during ancient times and old men dressed like beggars in the Warring States Period (403-221 BC).

"Some of my works are astonishing. They describe the depressed and dark side of the world. I'm not making up things. The world is indeed as it is," he said.

Where: Xin Beijing Art Gallery, 1-3 Granaries, 22 Nanxincang, Dongsu Shitiao, Dongcheng District

When: Until January 12, daily except Monday 10 am - 7 pm
Tel: 64096380

Upcoming

Drama

Kids' Magical Bubble Show
Where: Beijing Oriental Theater, Wangfujing, Dongcheng District

When: 11 am or 2:30 pm,
December 20 and 21
Admission: 80-580 Yuan
Tel: 400-888-4040



Tel: 6434 0266

Movie

Die Feuerzangenbowle

Presented in German with English subtitles.

Where: Club Obiwan, 4 Xihai Xiyuan, Xicheng District

When: 8 pm
Admission: Free (including popcorn)
Tel: 6617 3231

Friday, December 19

5

Exhibition

Stone Sculpture - Zimabwwe Solo Exhibition

Where: F4, Beijing Artistic Mansion, 200 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until December 26, daily except Monday 10 am - 6 pm
Admission: free
Tel: 6528 8866

Destroyed Lines

Where: Imagine Gallery, 8 Art Studio, Feijiacun Dong Lu, Cuigezhuang, Laiguangying Dong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 8, daily except Monday 10:30 am -

5:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6438 5747

Shooting

An exhibition to mark the gallery's first year anniversary.

Where: Han Ji Yun Contemporary Space, A1 Beigao, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 7, daily 11 am - 7 pm,
Admission: Free

Saturday, December 20

6

Exhibition

Hand and Breath - Mihel Mador Solo Exhibition

Where: Zero Field Art Center, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 11, daily except Monday 10:30 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 8456 5808

Silkscreen and Digital

Print Exhibition

The exhibit showcases a wide selection of limited edition silkscreen and digital prints by such artists as



Zhang Donghong, Shen Jingdong, Ma Yunfei, Li Zhihong and Li Shoubai.

Where: Beijing Central Art Gallery, 02G/F, Kempinski Hotel, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 31, daily except Monday 10 am - 7 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6450 8483

Nightlife

Unstoppable

AK-47 band will its new album *Unstoppable*

at the show, where audience who buy disks can get a free T-shirt.

Where: Yugong Yishan (West Courtyard of the site of the Duan Qirui Government), 2-3 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm
Cost: 50-80 yuan
Tel: 6404 2711

Mondialito

This Tokyo-based indie duo of Junko Nishimura and Toshiya Fueoka will be performing in sold-out con-

certs throughout Asia and Europe.

Where: Mao Live, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 8:30 pm
Cost: 145-200 yuan
Tel: 6417 7845

Movie

Sztuczki

Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 3 pm
Admission: 10-20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627

Sunday, December 21

7

Exhibition

Life-giving Spring Breeze and Rain

The exhibit presents 69 pieces from the 80s Generation Collection of the Beijing Artists' Association. It is made up of Chinese paintings, prints and oil paintings by popular artists and out-

standing young artists.

Where: National Art Museum of China, 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until December 24, 9 am - 5 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 6400 6326

New Year's Gift from Young Artists - Group Exhibition

A group of young artists presents its new works, with exhibit pieces updated everyday.

Where: Beijing

Center for the Arts at Legation Quarter, 23 Qianmen Dong Dajie, Chongwen District

When: Until January 4, daily 10 am - 10 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6559 8008



Nightlife

Fiesta Latina

Where: Vics (inside the north gate of the Workers Stadium), Chaoyang District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 30 yuan (includes one free drink)

Tel: 5293 0333

Queer Sundays

Where: The Boat, 8 Liangmahe Nan Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 8 am
Admission: Free

Tel: 6460 5512

Movie

King of London

The film is directed by Valeria Ruiz and stars Georg Nikoloff and Simona Brhlikova.

Where: Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwan-gzhuang Xiaoku, Shuangqing Lu (East Gate of Tsinghua University), Haidian District
When: 3 pm
Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 6279 1280

Stage in January

Concert

Radetsky March

Who: China Film Symphony Orchestra
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 1, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Butterfly Lovers and the Yellow River

Who: Chai Liang, Tan Xiaotang and the China Film Symphony Orchestra
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 2, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Spirited Away

Who: Hayao Miyazaki and Joe Hisaishi
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-880 yuan
Tel: 6417 0058

Lang Lang New Year Piano Recital

Who: Lang Lang
Where: National Indoor Stadium (inside the Olympic Park), Beichen Dong Lu, Chaoyang District
When: January 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 190-2,009 yuan
Tel: 6417 0058

New Year Orchestral Concert

Who: Conducted by Earnest Martinez-Izquierdo
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District
When: January 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6501 1854

Concert of Traditional Chinese Music Classics

Who: Orchestral Music Group of the China Opera and Dance-Drama Theater

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 18, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Dance

Swan Lake

Who: Hong Kong Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 1, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Beauty and the Beast

Who: Birmingham Royal Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 13-15, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Romeo and Juliet

Who: Birmingham Royal Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 17-18, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Cinderella

Who: Israel Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 28-29, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-880 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Journey to the West

Who: Guangzhou Acrobatic Troupe, China Oriental Song and Dance Troupe, Songshan Shaolin Martial Arts Troupe and Guangdong Dance School
Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District
When: January 14-31, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-880 yuan
Tel: 6835 4455

(By Li Jing)

Beauty beware! Hidden dangers of enema abuse

By Annie Wei

One might not realize how inexpensive it is to have an enema done at China's big and regulated hospitals. As the reporter experienced it after being encouraged by her highly beauty-concerned group of girlfriends, she realized a long-term healthy body comes from the daily care of small details.

The day at the Chinese Traditional Medicine hospital's colostomy department was hardly an enjoyable excursion. The lobby was jammed with old people who stunk of indigestion.

Everyone has heard of an enema the dreaded apparatus. During the procedure, the patient lies on a bed while a nozzle is inserted into the anus, through which water is forced into the colon.

It's not a hobby to share with your next date.

Luckily, the woman doctor, surnamed Chen, who is in charge of the process, was gentle and experienced. Many people feel embarrassed and uneasy the first time they go for an enema. A full colon cleanse takes 30 minutes, over which 4.5 liters of water are taken rectally. In addition to the patients who need an enema for a colon X-ray, many come based on their friends' recommendation.

Chen said an enema does help some people feel more energetic. However, she noted that it's better to remove waste through a healthy diet, a glass of lemon or honey water in the morning and vigorous exercise.

Li Juan, 35, a freelance writer, said she felt like her belly was flatter and she had more energy. "I wouldn't do it regularly, but every few months should be fine," Li said.

However, some people take an enema every week, and models advocate it as a secret to weight loss.

Myths about enema

Zhong Jie, a doctor from Shanghai Ruijing Hospital's digestive system department, dispels some myths about enemas:

Beijing Today (BT): Many people say an enema can cure constipation or remove backed up waste. Is this true?

Zhong Jie (ZJ): When a patient takes an enema, he or she is receiving a huge amount of water into the colon and that helps to remove waste. But it's a temporary solution, not a cure. An enema is a one-time solution and cannot cure constipation. Constipation is a result of many factors that we believe have to do with lifestyle and overall health. It's ridiculous to say an enema can remove waste that has been there for a long time. The mucous membrane of the colon is smooth and does not grip things. After spending money and suffering some pain, one feels good to see lots of waste exit his or her body. However, under normal condition, one can clean out their waste with a good diet and plenty of water.

BT: Some people take enema to lose weight and claim they do see oil from their body waste, why is that?

ZJ: It's not realistic to lose weight by enema. For most people, nutrition is absorbed in the small bowel. There is nothing nutritious left in the colon, which only forms waste and absorbs water and electrolytes. The enema will wash away waste and a tiny amount of nutrition. Of course, if someone is on an incredibly oily diet, much of the extra fat may pass through to the colon, in which case a patient would see oil in his or her enema discharge. However, by that point, any fat that would go into the body has already been absorbed.

BT: Since an enema temporarily cleans out waste, would it be safe to say it detoxifies the body?

ZJ: All waste has a certain amount of toxins as a result of metabolism. Generally speaking, people get rid of their waste through their normal routine. On the other hand, people with serious constipation may have a buildup of toxins, indicated by fatigue and a darkened complexion. For such cases, an enema could provide significant detoxification. However, it is still not something people should use frequently. An enema once every two weeks is too often. Taking it once in a while does not solve any problems because we eat at every meal.

BT: A lot of rich women go in for enemas regularly as a beauty treatment. Is this a bad idea?

ZJ: There is no proof to show an enema can be considered beauty therapy.

BT: Assuming it is not for beauty or other medical purposes, are there any dangers in having the occasional enema?

ZJ: There are definitely side-effects. First of all, the enema should be administered by a trained professional. They know how much water can be pumped into the colon and how to adjust the flow based on a patient's reaction. Also, since the enema involves inserting a tube into the anus, it is possible for an infection to occur. Some people have a loose sphincter muscle and it can affect the urethra, especially in women.

BT: What can happen to someone if they receive too many enemas?

ZJ: There are quite a few issues. First of all, the sphincter muscle can start to weaken leading to rectal prolapse: where the walls of the colon fall out and protrude through the anus. Second, it makes cause some people to rely on the extra force of the enema to dispel their waste. It can also have an impact on the colon's bacterial flora.



CFP Photo

Basic information ON enema

An enema is a procedure by which liquid is introduced into the rectum and colon via the anus. It is used for medical reasons, as a treatment for constipation and incontinence, and it is an integral part of many alternative health therapies. In earlier times, an enema was known as a clysters, and was used more often than it is today.

Clysters were the favored medical treatment of Western bourgeoisie and nobility through the 19th century. As medical knowledge was fairly limited in those days, purgative clysters were used for a wide variety of ailments, including stomach aches and constipation.

Where to take enema: Register at the digestive system department of a formal and regulated comprehensive hospital, and see the doctor to schedule an appointment
Cost: starting from 120 yuan

By Zheng Lu

Piercing winds blow in the silent valley, and on the ice face that is 10 meters above ground, climbers are conscious of their heavy breathing and the echoes of "Pang, pang, pang" as their axes strike the solid wall of ice. Chips scatter everywhere, reflecting the sun's brilliance.

Ice climbing fans in Beijing are in luck, because the city is surrounded by choice climbing spots – both natural and artificial. The best season for ice climbing is from late December to early March, and *Beijing Today* knows some of the best sites. The sport is full of excitement, but also danger, so novices should get training and assistance from experienced climbers.

conquering frozen waterfalls

For beginners

Heilongtan Scenic Spot and Jingdu Diyipu

There are several popular waterfalls in Heilongtan or Black Dragon Lake. The name comes from a tale saying that in ancient times, a black dragon came to the mountains and found not one plant or a single drop of water, so he worked hard day and night to cultivate plants. A fairy who saw the dragon's diligence bestowed him with colorful stripes and eighteen pearls, which the animal scattered in the mountains where they turned into 18 lakes and waterfalls.

Heilongtan's frozen waterfalls have slopes that are between 60 and 75 degrees – ideal for new climbers.

Because of its natural, thick and solid ice face, each winter the falls attract groups of outdoor sports fans including Tsinghua and Peking University's climbing teams.

The 30-meter-high waterfall is within 10 minute's walk away from Heilongtan's entrance, while the 55-meter-high one is about an hour's walk away.

About three kilometers north of Heilongtan is another cluster of waterfalls called Jingdu Diyipu, which means the "Number One Waterfall in the Capital."

Most of the falls here are sim-

ilar to Heilongtan's, about 30 meters high and sloped 60 degrees. One that presents a bigger challenge is 62.5 meters high with an angle of more than 70 degrees – not for the novice!

Jingdu Diyipu's management recommends that climbers come in January when the ice has hardened significantly.

Getting there: Take Bus 980 at Dongzhimen to Miyun. There are buses in Miyun that can get you to Heilongtan.

Tel: 6102 5391

Admission: 36 yuan



Many frozen waterfalls in Beijing's suburbs are ideal for ice climbing.

For beginners and veterans

Tianxianpu Scenic Spot

Tianxiapu, or Fairy Fall, is known as a traveler's paradise. In winter, when the plants and flowers wither, the frozen waterfalls take center stage in this wonderland of nature.

There are four frozen falls around the place, but the most suitable ones for climbing are the following three:

Mixianpu: It is 60 meters high and located at the edge of Tianxianpu. The

slope is not very steep, so it is suitable for beginner climbers. But if the weather is not cold enough to keep water frozen, this waterfall is in danger of collapsing.

Juxianpu: With a height of 40 meters and a 60-degree angle, this fall is a good training ground for novices.

Tianxianpu: The tallest one in the area, this is also the hardest one to conquer and only recommended for veteran

climbers. About 80 meters high, and 15 meters wide, only the left side of the wall is well-formed. People should not try to climb the right side, which is very dangerous and no one has succeeded yet.

Getting there: Take Bus 980 at Dongzhimen to Miyun, then take the bus to Tianxianpu.

Tel: 6528 2824

Admission: 20 yuan

For those with basic skills or are bringing children

Taoyuan Xiangu

This is the site nearest the metropolis, but is still 90 kilometers away from downtown and close to the Miyun Reservoir. Three waterfalls plus one designed especially for children and beginners can be found here.

The ice walls' huge surface is the reason Taoyuan Xiangu is popular among climbers. Most of the falls are man-made, but are suitable for training. The annual National Ice Climbing Competition is held here in January, an event that attracts foreign contestants.

Zhang Yucheng, Taoyuan Xiangu's manager, said the frozen falls here are very different from each other. Some are almost vertical.

Climbers who already have basic skills need not worry. Suitable for them is the ice wall on the western part of the mountain, which has a gentle slope. Meanwhile, veteran climbers should head to the eastern side with its higher and steeper falls. One of the steep falls has a gentle slope that novices can try out.

Tonglepu, or Happy Children's Fall, was specially made for children and beginners. The angle is 40 degrees, which Zhang, the manager, said is "safe enough for walking."

Getting there: At Dongzhimen, take Bus 980 to Miyun, then transfer to a bus to Shichengxiang.

Tel: 6102 5667

Admission: 35 yuan

Continued on page 21

... continued from page 20

For veteran climbers

Yunmengxia Valley

Two natural falls can be found in Yunmengxia Valley: The taller one is 80 meters high, while the other is a little over 30 meters.

Both are only suitable for veteran climbers, an administrator at the site who declined to give her name said. The taller waterfall is perpendicular to the ground, while the other has a 70-degree angle.

The administrator said the taller waterfall is ready for climbing, but the other needs until January to freeze properly.

Lang Jun, one of the climbers who visited Yunmengxia last week, said the feeling of climbing the falls was hard to describe. "You can even hear the sound of flowing water under the ice while climbing," he said in wonder. He said climbers who take on the waterfalls should be well-experienced and should come with proper equipment.

Getting there: Take Bus 980 at Dongzhimen to Miyun, then take a taxi for the remaining 20 kilometers.

Tel: 6102 5621

Admission: 20 yuan



Protective gear are necessary.

Photos provided by Wei Shuyao

Kit:

Ice climbing is a sport that needs proper equipment made of quality material.

The basic kit is made up of an ice axe; a crampon, a hinged pair of curved iron bars for raising heavy objects; and an ice piton, a metal spike fitted at one end with an eye for securing a rope and driven into the ice. Other necessities are similar to those used in rock climbing: a safety belt, waterproof rope, locking carabiner, helmet, ascender and descender.

As for clothing, mountain snow boots, gloves and a safety helmet are a must. Climbers should dress warmly in clothes that are waterproof and ventilated.

Ice climbing tips:

1. Do not pound the axe too hard into the ice surface. Avoid shaking the axe once it breaks the surface of the ice, because this can cause a fissure that can affect the steadiness of your axe placement.

2. Securely bury the snow boots' ice claw when kicking the ice. Whether the ice claw tightly digs into the ice affects the body's balance and the quality of the climb. The correct way to do it is to make the knee the axis when the foot is lifted. Then take advantage of the weight of the climbing boots to kick the foot steadily forward and let the ice claw's two front teeth plunge into the ice. Remember not to stomp feet up and down, which can easily smash the ice surface. Moreover, try to flatten your feet; if they are knock-kneed then the ice claws cannot work properly.

3. An ice wall's characteristics are transformed as the climate changes, so climbers should be carefully observant as they ascend. They should also listen to the instructions and recommendations of the site's staff, who know the area well.

4. It is a good idea to eat and drink before climbing, so you will have enough energy for the exercise.




Christmas Eve Concerto Co-performance
 by Grand Meteopark Hotel and
 YOU



Another busy year is about to pass, the song of Jingle Bells is reminding us of the approaching of Christmas. Romantic and joyfully party has been fully prepared, and YOU are the enthusiastic one we are waiting for.

On the Christmas Eve, Grand Meteopark Hotel will provide you with little angels' chorus, styles of performances, an aura of Christmas, smiling Santa Clause sending out candies and exciting lucky draw.

Excitement shall never be missed!

December 24, 6:30pm--10:30pm
 Hotline: 8352999-8331
 Address: Southeastern Corner of Guanganmen
 Crossover, Xuanwu District, Beijing


MERRY CHRISTMAS

CFP Photo

The power of passion

By Mike Grigg

My friend Tracy and I were recently out to dinner. As we enjoyed our appetizers we began to discuss different styles of management. By the time we had polished off our desserts we had formulated the basis of a technique that may well serve to ignite the passions of your employees and change the way they view your organization.

Tracy was concerned about how she could effectively train her staff, highlighting that her most common problem was a lack of passion among many employees. Even though many multinationals have begun to factor "passion" into their corporate values, it remains a challenging intangible to harness. Many of us in the HR field would surely feel more confident and satisfied knowing that our organization boast employees enthused with passion for their daily work. "So, how should we push them



Mike Grigg is a ClarkMorgan Corporate Trainer

When employees are allowed to express what they feel passionate about, and you are there to guide and support their passion by linking it to the company's expectations, they will feel empowered and motivated to grow.

to find passion?" Tracy asked. This proved to be a difficult question to answer.

After our discussion, I began to contemplate how I was motivating my staff to find passion in their work. Then, I looked even deeper and asked myself "what do I really feel passionate about?" Lots of things came to my mind: playing sports, meeting new people, traveling, photography, writing, even watching an exciting film. However, the experiences that excite people are always going to be unique — your passion could be anything. When I asked some of my staff a similar question I received an array of answers, including sports, shopping, cooking, learning and family.

Once you have helped your employees express and explain their passion, the next step is to link it to their job expectations. Since many of my employees are female, a good example I used is to link job expectation to shopping. I have often used this example with my female staff."

Mike: "When you shop, what is it that you like most?"

Staff member: "I enjoy being with my friends, touching new clothes and trying them on, seeing what fits and how it makes me feel beautiful, and most of all spending my salary on a new dress I worked hard to buy."

Mike: "The next time you walk into the

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office, try to imagine that you are walking into a clothing shop with lots of new clothes. Treat the people you work with like the friends you shop with. Smile when you see them and take a minute to make conversation. When you have new paperwork to process, imagine that it is like new clothes, to be admired and tried on. When you are writing an e-mail, only send it after it fits with your expectations and makes you feel really good. Also, just like the feeling you have when you spend your salary on something you really worked hard for, try to imagine how great you will feel when your line manager walks in and personally thanks you for all your hard work and effort on the latest project."

A link between work and an outside passion can be made from just about any topic. Most employees, when going through this "linking activity," will give a scope of what they are capable of accomplishing in their jobs. For instance one member mentioned that a dress she really loved was worth three months of her salary, and that she worked overtime and did everything she possibly could to obtain more money in less time to afford it. How would that look to a manager? An attitude based around maximizing your time and energy towards making maximum profit is high on the list of most companies' goals.

When employees are allowed to express what they feel passionate about, and you are there to guide and support their passion by linking it to the company's expectations, they will feel empowered and motivated to grow.



CFP Photo

Greetings from Hotels

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ZHONGGUANCUN
北京中关村皇冠假日酒店

Crowne Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun

In this joyful season before the start of 2009, the Crowne Plaza sends its festive greetings and wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Where: 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District

Tel: 5993 8888



Hilton
Beijing Wangfujing
北京王府井希尔顿酒店

Crowne Plaza Beijing

The Crowne Plaza is ready to celebrate Christmas and ring in the New Year.

With the Beijing Olympics, the city experienced a year of challenges, excitement and achievements. But 2009 brings change, and with it the need to prepare for harder times. Nevertheless, to create a great hotel guests love and become the place to meet at Wangfujing, the Crowne's team is providing a great guest experience and is ready to face the challenges ahead. The Crowne looks forward to welcoming many at the Crowne Plaza Beijing, and wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a Healthy, Happy and Successful 2009.

Where: 48 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 5911 9999

CROWNE PLAZA®

BEIJING
北京国际艺苑皇冠假日酒店

Hilton Beijing Wangfujing

At Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, we're keen to get underway with our first Christmas celebrations. Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, distinguished by its fine dining approach, offers the warmth of true Chinese hospitality. The Hilton is honored to welcome you with the highest levels of personal service and the finest cuisine. In the spirit of its unique approach to individuality and personalization, we wish you an unforgettable Christmas and a wonderful New Year ahead.

Where: 8 Wangfujing Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 5812 8888

THE WESTIN
BEIJING

Financial Street

北京金融街威斯汀大酒店

The Westin Beijing Financial Street

The Westin Beijing Financial Street wishes you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This is the season to celebrate togetherness with family and friends, may you all have a safe and joyous holiday season.

Where: 9b Jinrong Jie, Xicheng District
Tel: 6606 8866

北京東方君悅大酒店

GRAND HYATT
BEIJING
AT ORIENTAL PLAZA

Grand Hyatt Beijing

Grand Hyatt Beijing wishes you a happy New Year. 2009 is the Year of the Ox, which carries a promise of prosperity through fortitude and hard work. Your support has been wonderful in 2008, having shared such precious moments as the historic Beijing Olympic Games. Thank you from all of us, and we wish everyone the best of health and quality family time during the forthcoming season.

Where: 1 Dongchang'an Jie, Oriental Plaza, Dongcheng District
Tel: 8518 1234

北京港澳中心瑞士酒店

swissôtel BEIJING
HONG KONG MACAU CENTER

Swissotel Beijing Hong Kong Macau Center

2008 is drawing to a close, and the excitement of the Olympic Games continues to wind down. Swissotel thanks its patrons for their past contributions and continuing loyalty.

During the upcoming holiday, we hope you will find time to spend with your loved ones and cherish their company. We will also keep in our hearts the many people who suffered this year and still need our support.

Swissotel wishes everyone a happy, festive season and a prosperous New Year!

Where: 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 6553 2288s



JW MARRIOTT®
BEIJING
北京 JW 万豪酒店

JW Marriott Hotel Beijing

This is the season not only to make merry — but to pause and give thanks for many blessings and share this special time with friends and family.

The year 2008 honored all Beijingers with the hosting of the Summer Olympic Games, and the JW Marriott Hotel Beijing extend to you and yours its best wishes for a joyous and prosperous 2009.

Where: 83 Jianguo Lu, China Central Place, Chaoyang District
Tel: 5908 6688



GRAND MILLENNIUM
BEIJING

北京千禧大酒店

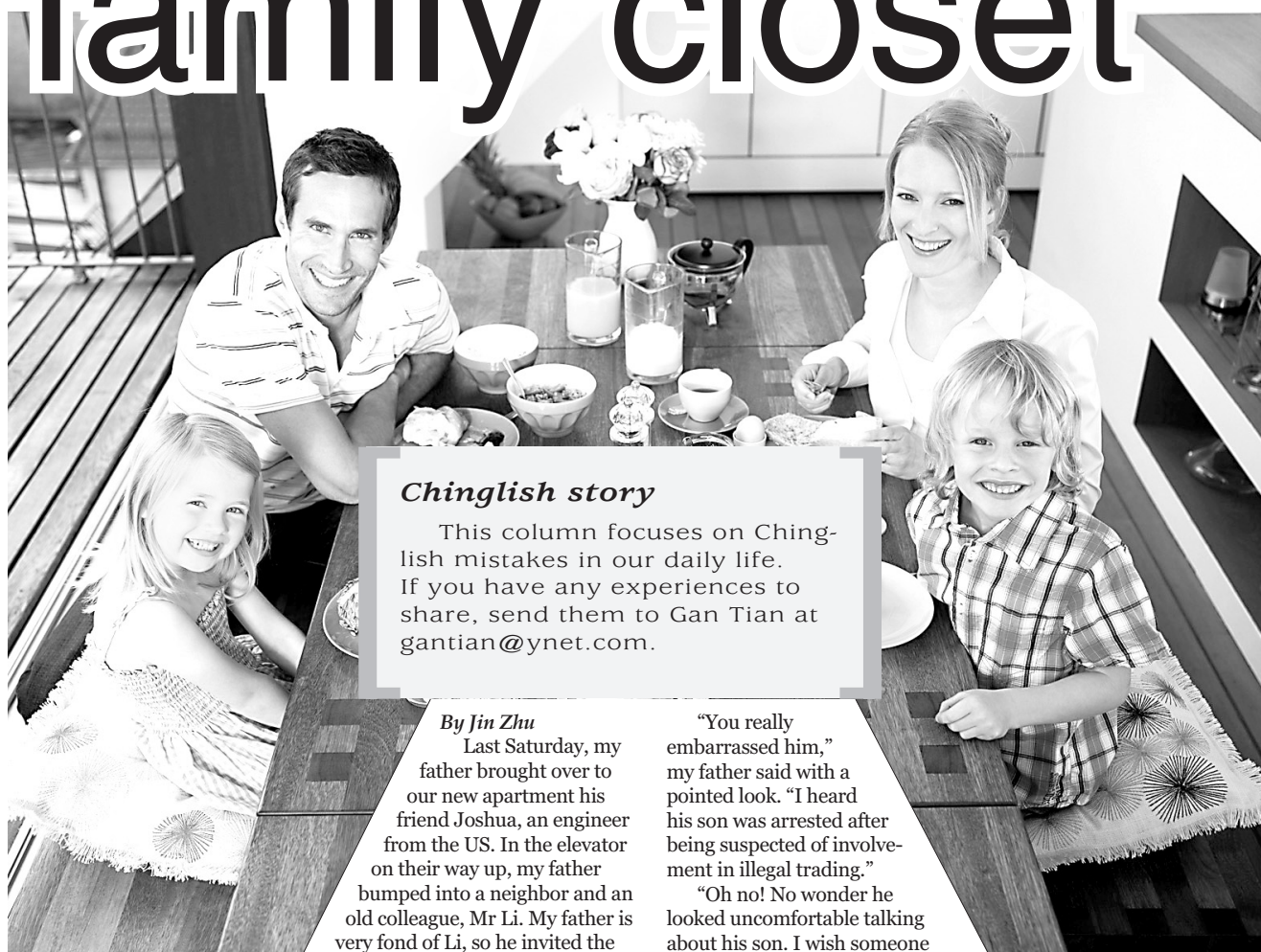
Grand Millennium Beijing

This is the season to celebrate togetherness with family and friends. The Grand Millennium is extending its heartfelt wishes for a Festive Season and wishes its visitors a New Year full of peace and success.

Where: 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Fortune Center, Chaoyang District
Tel: 8587 6888

(By Sun Feng)

Skeletons in the family closet



Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Gan Tian at gantian@ynet.com.

By Jin Zhu

Last Saturday, my father brought over to our new apartment his friend Joshua, an engineer from the US. In the elevator on their way up, my father bumped into a neighbor and an old colleague, Mr Li. My father is very fond of Li, so he invited the old man to join him and Joshua for dinner at our house.

"Do you remember Mr Li? He is a former colleague, saw him in the elevator," my father told me by way of introducing Li, when the trio entered the apartment.

"Of course I remember! Your son was one of my playmates in kindergarten," I said.

After dinner, as the four of us sat around the dining room table, I asked Li: "So how is your son? I remembered him being a crybaby in kindergarten."

"Well ... My son is doing well. But you know, umm ... it is quite difficult for a young man to, umm ... set up a successful business in such a short time," he said.

Li turned red, then muttered something about expecting an important phone call and said a quick good-bye to everyone.

I looked at my father and Joshua with a puzzled expression.

"You really embarrassed him," my father said with a pointed look. "I heard his son was arrested after being suspected of involvement in illegal trading."

"Oh no! No wonder he looked uncomfortable talking about his son. I wish someone had warned me," I said. "As an old saying goes, domestic shame should not be publicized."

"What do you mean by 'domestic shame'?" Joshua said.

"I mean his son has brought shame to the family. Apparently, Mr Li did not want others to know."

"I get it. A more appropriate term would be 'family skeletons.' It comes from the idiom 'skeletons in the closet,'" our guest said.

"It has a very interesting origin. It is said there was once an affectionate couple. Everyone thought the wife was the luckiest woman in the world for having such a loving husband. But the wife let out a secret one day. Her husband asks her to kiss a skeleton hiding in their closet every night – the skeleton of her former lover who had been killed in a duel. It turned out the wife was not so lucky after all; she just did not want others to know of her family's troubles," Joshua said.

CFP Photo

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.

后 勤 部
REAR-SERVICE DEPT.

Rear-Service Department

By Tiffany Tan

It is amazing how such an innocent sign, when translated into English, turned into something so sexually loaded. *Houqin* means "logistics," therefore the sign identifies the office as the "logistics department."

The reaction of English speakers who read the translation will probably range from a snicker to a howl of laughter. A more detailed explanation will not see the light of day, so let us just say that those who are looking for "rear services" will not find them in this prim and proper-looking office.

Local professor: Shida Zhu

1. The Conservatory of Music as well as the Forbidden City Concert Hall and the National Center for Performing Arts

When you enumerate more than two things, you may use the phrase "as well as." However, it should come at the end of the list. For this phrase, it should be: The Conservatory of Music, the Forbidden City Concert Hall as well as the National Center for Performing Arts. "As well as" can mean "besides" or "as much as." Here is a sample sentence for the latter definition: He regards her words as a

source of provocation as well as protection.

2. Menus are populated by traditional Western food and Chinese dishes.

The main verb "populate" is improperly used in this sentence. "Populate" is used in reference to people. For instance, you may say: "The earthquake-stricken areas are mainly populated by ethnic minorities" or "The area where wild animals roam freely is scarcely populated." You cannot say a menu is populated by dishes. It would be better to say: Menus offer Western as well as Chinese dishes.

Blacklist

Beijing Today has come up with Blacklist, a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch out for it each week.

Native speaker: Penny Turner

Penny Turner 1. The Conservatory of Music as well as the Forbidden City Concert Hall and the National Center for Performing Arts

The function of "as well as" in this phrase is the same as that of "and" – which appears at the end of the list. The common practice is to use only one conjunction or "connector" for each list, so you can choose to use "as well as" or "and" before the last item. The first option would be "The Conservatory of Music, the Forbidden City Concert Hall and the National Center for Performing Arts," and the

second option would be "The Conservatory of Music, the Forbidden City Concert Hall as well as the National Center for Performing Arts."

2. Menus are populated by traditional Western food and Chinese dishes.

The biggest problem in this sentence is word choice, because like Professor Zhu said, "populate" is used in connection with people. To fix this sentence while keeping to its original meaning, you can say: "The menus consist of traditional Western food and Chinese dishes" or "The menus are made up of traditional Western food and Chinese dishes."

The Duchess (2008)

Movie of the week

It is nice to say this film does not turn out to be another Marie Antoinette, though the main characters are all women, and all are trapped in complex relationships. This time, Keira Knightley plays a role similar to her appearance in *Pride and Prejudice*, that of a modern woman trapped in a male-dominated society. Another star who glitters in the film is Ralph Fiennes who elevates it above the average genre flick. Though his character makes the loveless and painful marriage, Fiennes plays him as a man of his time.

Synopsis

The movie follows the life of 18th century aristocrat Georgiana, duchess of Devonshire. Though reviled for her extravagant political and personal life, Georgiana is a vibrant beauty and celebrity of her time. When she is trapped in an unhappy triangle with her husband and his live-in mistress, the desperate Duchess falls passionately in love with an ambitious young politician, Charles Grey. The affair causes a bitter conflict with her husband and threatens to erupt into a scandal.



Scene 1

(Lady Spencer, Georgiana's mother is negotiating with the Duke of Devonshire about the marriage. The conversation happens as a prediction that the marriage will not be a happy one.)

Lady Spencer (L): I trust Your Grace (1) still finds Georgiana an attractive girl?

Duke of Devonshire (D): Of course, Lady Spencer.

L: She's an accomplished lady of quality and devoted to her duties. She's fluent in French, Italian, Latin and fully versed in (2) horsemanship and dancing and ...

D: Yes, I'm aware of all that. She's a credit to you. (3)

L: I can't think of anything that would stand in the way of (4) a singularly happy marriage.

Heaton (H): These are not the issues that burden the Duke, Lady Spencer. It is His Grace's duty to produce an heir. On the other hand, your daughter may expect a handsome reward when that occurs.

D: Thank you, Heaton.

H: Your Grace.

L: Your Grace may rest assured (5). The women in our family have never forfeited on (6) that account.

Scene 2

(After she gave birth to two daughters, Georgina moved to Bath with the Duke of Devonshire. She meets Lady Elizabeth Foster for the first time at a party.)

Georgina (G): I don't believe we've been introduced.

Elizabeth Foster (E): No, we haven't. Lady Elizabeth Foster.

G: I saw you talking with my husband.

E: Yes. He wanted to dance.

G: That's not usually considered his forte (7). And you declined?

E: I'm ill at ease (8) with male company for the moment.

G: So what brings you to Bath?

E: My husband, Mr. Foster, is enjoying his mistress in Bourne-mouth and I wanted some diversion. And you?

G: The Duke is taking the waters for his gout. And I for my health.

E: Really? I heard you were here because you could not conceive a son ... I beg your pardon, that was an awful thing to say.

G: It was the truth, at least.

E: Trust me to say something silly. I always do, you know.

Scene 3

(Georgina quarrels with her husband after she learns of his affair with Elizabeth.)

G: Of all the women in England, you had to throw yourself on her. I have never once objected to any of your affairs. I have accepted whatever arrangement you have proposed. I have raised Charlotte as my own daughter. But this ... I have one single thing of my own. Why couldn't you let me keep Elizabeth for myself? What kind of man are you? She is my sole comfort in our marriage. You have robbed me of my only friend! What is wrong with me?

D: I ... I've never claimed to be a man of fine sensibility, Georgina. But I've always known what I expect from this marriage and what I'm prepared to give.



Scene 4

(Georgina tries to come to a showdown by asking the Duke to make a deal. She wants to accept Elizabeth in exchange for her husband accepting her relationship with Charles Grey.)

G: All right.

D: "All right?"

G: Do you love each other?

D: Georgiana ...

G: Do you love Bess, Your Grace?

D: Where is all this leading?

E: I make no demands on him.

G: And, Bess, do you love my husband?

E: As I do you.

G: And so you intend to stay?

E: William has asked that I do.

G: You couldn't find it in your heart to refuse him?

E: No.

G: Then let us make a deal.

D: A deal?

G: Yes. I give you my blessing if you will accept my feelings for Charles Grey. I didn't realize it at first. I thought that perhaps it was only a dalliance. It can make me happy.

D: A deal? A deal. I don't make deals. Why would I? I'm in charge of it all. You know, I would call him out. I would challenge him. I'd put a bullet in his head.

Scene 5

(But Georgina still has Grey's child. The girl is taken away by Grey's family immediately after her birth. Then the Duchess returns to her family.)

D: I'm not particularly adept at (9) expressing myself when it comes to matters of a more personal nature. But I shall try. Over the years, I have acted in ways that you have judged to be harsh. Well, I do not wish for you to undergo any further suffering. In fact, I would like our lives to find a calm normality. Lady Melbourne has arranged a small gathering in honor of your recent return from holiday given some of the vague reports that have been circulating this past year. I think it would be wise for us to go. A show of unity, so to speak (10).

G: Who will be there?

D: Everybody.



Vocabulary

- Your Grace:** title used when addressing a nobleman or person of high rank.
- be versed in:** be good at
- be a credit to someone:** make someone proud
- stand in the way of:** disturb
- rest assured:** set one's heart at rest
- forfeited on:** here it means being unsuccessful
- forte:** that at which a person excels
- be ill at ease:** feel uncomfortable
- adept at:** to be good at
- so to speak:** used to suggest some people may not agree with the way something was said

(By Wang Yu)